Rape or Romance?

Sexual Violence and the Lust for Power

in Ovid's *Fasti.*

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Contents

Introduction

Until the late Twentieth Century *Fasti* was arguably Ovid's least favoured extant work.[1] *Fasti* was extensively compared with *Ars Amatoria* and *Metamorphoses* and in light of these comparisons was considered to be stylistically and artistically weak.[2] This text has been interpreted as a jumbled compilation of history, astronomy and quasi-Callimachean poetics. From an historical and anthropological point of view, the work is a failure; for despite purporting to deliver reliable and thorough information on Roman cults and festivals (*Fast*. 1. 1-2), the information is often convoluted and inaccurate. Critics condemned the work as one that fails artistically.[3] *Fasti* had consistently been interpreted as a badly written pro-Augustan poem.[4] Such readings significantly over-simplified the text. These interpretations saw *Fasti* reduced to its alleged purpose.[5]

Ovid's *Fasti* is a calendar unlike any other. It is a poem written in six books corresponding to the first six months of the Julian calendar. Within this work Ovid engages in a dialogue with Augustus to contest the emperor's manipulation of time.[6] *Fasti* is not simply a day by day commentary on Roman rituals and festivals. There are complex social and imperial implications

[1] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 2. Newlands argues that *Fasti* has been 'one of the least popular works' of Ovid. Wilkinson, L. P. *Ovid Recalled*, (1955), p. 262.
[2] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 3.
Hinds, S. *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse*, (1987), pp. 10-11.
[3]Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 2. Newlands asserts that Latin scholars have found *Fasti* to be, 'full of errors, an inadequate and unreliable source of Roman cultic practice and belief'.
[4] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 48. Barchiesi quotes an anonymous author who asserts that in writing *Fasti* 'Ovid unenthusiastically does his duty as a *civis Romanus*'. Wilkinson, L. P. *Ovid Recalled*, (1955), p9. 262-264.
[5] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 49.
[6] Newlands, C. E. 'Transgressive Acts: Ovid's Treatment of the Ides of March', (1996), p. 320.

found within this text. Recent scholarship began to embrace the poem's eccentricities and intricacies. Newlands suggested *Fasti* experienced something of a 'critical renaissance'.[7] No longer is *Fasti* viewed as a failed literary calendar. The text has been opened up to reveal layers and depth of literary allusion and subtlety, allowing a deeper understanding of the poet's critique of the Augustan political regime.

The position taken in this thesis is that Ovid's *Fasti* is a poem about Rome. It is my opinion that Ovid wrote *Fasti* as much more than a historical and mythological treatise on the events of the Roman calendar. This thesis will show that *Fasti* was written as a commentary and critique of Ovid's contemporary Rome and of its ruler Augustus just as much, or perhaps even more so, than it was a description of the nation's aetiological past.[8] The *Fasti* contains a wealth of history, legend, astronomy and some historical fact. It also contains allusion and at times blatant observations about the current state of Roman politics. *Fasti* is a poem about Rome. It is a poem about the Rome of the poet's past and that of his present.

Recent scholarship has moved away from the belief that *Fasti* was a failed Roman calendar. Modern scholars are largely unwilling to accept Ovid's declaration of *Fasti's* intent. It is doubtful that *Fasti* was a work solely dedicated to detailing Roman history, astronomy and aetiology. The consistent recurrence of sexual material within *Fasti* heightens scepticism regarding Ovid's purportedly innocent poetic aims:

[7] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 5.
[8] Hinds, S. '*Arma* in *Fasti* Part 1', (1992), p. 112. '… the poet whose work had so much to say about contemporary life that it eventually ran into trouble with the man who more than any other controlled the discourses of past and present Roman reality'.

tempora cum causis Latium digesta per annum
lapsaque sub terras ortaque signa canam. (*Fast*. 1. 1-2).
'The order of the calendar throughout the Latin year, its causes and the heavenly signs that rise and set beneath the earth, of these I will sing'.

Ovid has strategically positioned stories of rape, sexual and physical violence and erotic and comic seduction within the text of *Fasti*. Contemporary and modern readers of Ovid alike were and are accustomed to regularly encountering sexual material within his works. Ovid's repeated inclusion of rape stories is an issue that continues to confront. The number and variety of rape myths within his poetry compelled Richlin to assert that 'a woman reading Ovid faces difficulties'.[9] It is my opinion that male or female, any reader of Ovid's rapes is faced with difficulty in ascertaining the necessity of their inclusion. Often on face value these rape stories can appear pointless and confusing. One must ask oneself what the point of these myths is. This, I believe, is exactly why they are included. Ovid wanted his readers to ask, to question and to think about the reason behind their inclusion.

In 1992 Amy Richlin wrote a work entitled 'Reading Ovid's Rapes'.[10] This study forms a base for investigating several of the significant and graphic rape myths found within the works of Ovid. It does not discuss every rape myth, as a close study of all the rapes found in the poems of Ovid would be a monumental task. The *Metaporphoses* alone contains 'more than fifty tales of rape in its fifteen books'.[11]As an Ovidian scholar, the idea of interpreting the purpose behind the inclusion of these rape stories is profoundly interesting and appealing. Richlin's attempt to 'read the rapes' of Ovid was, thus, the impetus of this thesis. This thesis, like Richlin's article, will by

[9] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992), p. 158.
[10] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992).
[11] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992), p. 158.

no means be able to discuss or investigate each and every rape found within *Fasti*. What I hope it will do, however, is to make links and further connections between several accounts of sexual violence and oppression found within this text.

Rape is a difficult subject to investigate. The word rape often conjures strong and emotional responses. The rapes from within the Ovidian corpus are confronting. They are depictions of, at times, hideous and brutal savagery being inflicted on one human from another. It is rather difficult to understand at times exactly what the point of such a catalogue of barbaric and horrific tales of rape could possibly be. Amy Richlin suggests that the texts of Ovid 'take pleasure' in acts of violence.[12] This is not an opinion that I share. However, due to the vast number and the detailed horror of many of the rapes, it is not difficult to understand how she could come to that conclusion. I would like to offer a reading of rape, in the *Fasti* at least, as being something much more than a perverted author revelling in the titillation of sexual violence. In my view, there is much more to these rapes than the author pleasuring in depictions of violence. The struggles of the oppressed and the oppressor, the silent and the silencer, the weak and the strong are themes that are apparent in the rapes that occur within the poet's later works, notably *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*. This thesis reads rape in *Fasti*, almost without exception, as representing a metaphor for those who are oppressed and subjugated.

This thesis will argue that it is not necessarily useful or appropriate to discuss the rapes of Ovid as generic stories without distinction or difference. To do so would be an inaccurate and unfair treatment. The Ovidian rape myths are found throughout the works of a poet whose literary

[12] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992), p. 158.

career spanned some four decades, including one spent in exile.[13] The intent, purpose and design of these myths differ accordingly in tone, style and content. Approaching these rape episodes as individual, isolated fragments unrelated to the surrounding text is problematic. These events cannot simply be viewed in such isolation or treated with such disregard.

In a modern context, how are we to view rape stories from literature written over two thousand years ago? Would rape and sexual violence have been viewed as they are today? Perhaps the answer to this question can be found within the works themselves. The rape and consequent suicide of the Roman matron Lucretia is used as aetiology for the founding of the Roman Republic. Rape and rapists as depicted by Ovid in *Fasti* are brutal, savage and unforgiving. Victims are pure, innocent and vulnerable. In no way is rape represented as being acceptable or normal. That is the stance that will be adopted by this thesis. Those who commit rape act out in a maladaptive, threatening and aggressive manner driven by a lust for power.

Readers of *Fasti* seeking to find meaning within Ovid's rape stories are faced with several challenges. They must interpret links and connections between myths, legends and festivals. They must attempt to ascertain any significance in the inclusion of Greek myth while being mindful of the position and purpose of all rape stories of either Greek or Latin origin. This task is made somewhat easier by the fact that the months of the *Fasti* calendar have thematic foci. Stories appear to have been deliberately included within each book, strategically placed to highlight and strengthen the development of each month's theme. Three months, Books 2, 4 and

[13] *Amores* c20BCE – *Fasti* completed c17BCE. Ovid was exiled in c8CE.

6, have at their core significant stories concentrating on powerful women and their rape. It is with these three books that the re-reading of the *Fasti* rapes can begin.

Chapter One

Mute Mothers of Myth:

Giving Voice to the Women of *Fasti*

Callisto, a nymph of Greek origin, is raped by the Roman god Jupiter early in the second book of *Fasti*. This rape is not an isolated incident. The rape of Callisto begins a theme of rape and attempted rape that continues throughout Book 2 and into Book 3. These rapes demonstrate a brutal lust for power and control. In *Fasti* 2, rape is used with undeniable effect as the poet's metaphor for the abuse that is allowed and permitted to those in supreme power. Book 2 depicts control not only of a victim's body but also of her ability to speak. Ovid clearly, yet without overt or graphic description, advises his readers that deprivation of speech, physical and emotional suffering and humiliation, mutilation and death are all end results of rape. Rape is a metaphor for supreme power. The poet advises that all those falling foul of the mighty who control unlimited and untouchable command risk the same deadly consequences as the women of *Fasti* 2.

Why begin with Callisto? The answer to this question lies within the text itself. Thirty lines prior to the story of Callisto the Ovidian narrator exclaims that he wishes for a thousand voices with which to sing (*Fast*. 2. 119). What material could he possibly need all of these voices for? For the weighty, epic material (*Fast.* 2. 124-5) that is to follow: a discussion of the achievements of the *Princeps,* Augustus. Such discussion and praise of Augustus occurs to the detriment of the mighty Roman father, Romulus. Augustus, *pater patriae,* 'father of the fatherland' (*Fast*. 2. 127),

we are told, should in fact be known as, *pater orbis*, 'father of the world' (*Fast*. 2. 130). While Romulus raped, Augustus created marriage legislation (*Fast*. 2. 139-140). Romulus ruled with force, Augustus with law (*Fast*. 2. 141-142). Augustus has the name on earth that Jupiter holds in heaven:

> hoc tu per terras, quod in aethere Iuppiter alto,
> nomen habes: hominum tu pater, ille deum. (*Fast*. 2. 131-132)
> 'You have the name on earth that Jupiter has in high heaven. You are the father of men, he is the father of gods'.

This passage appears to be heaping praise onto the emperor whose rule and position is declared to be equal to that of the supreme *pater deus*. Augustus is Jupiter on earth.

The last four lines of this calendar entry, however, leave the reader with a puzzling thought, is it really such a good thing that their emperor is on earth what Jupiter is in the heavens?

> iam puer Idaeus media tenus eminet alvo
> et liquidas mixto nectare fundit aquas.
> en etiam, siquis Borean horrere solebat,
> gaudeat: a Zephyris mollior aura venit. (*Fast*. 2. 145-148)
> 'Already the Idaean boy shows himself to mid-waist and pours a stream of water mixed with nectar. And joy now for you too who shrink from Boreas, a softer wind comes now from the Zephyrs'.[14]

The Idaean boy is Ganymede, the son of Tros king of Phrygia. In his *Metamorphoses* Ovid provides his readers with a brief but succinct telling of his story. A beautiful young boy, Ganymede is spied by Zeus who transforms himself into an eagle and abducts him, carrying Ganymede to his home to act as his cupbearer (*Met*. 10. 155-162). Ganymede is raped and abducted by Jupiter. He is also, it is clear from the *Fasti* text, catasterised, transformed into the

[14] It is interesting to note that at this point in the text this passage referring to the change of wind occurs. The coming breeze is Zephyrus. In *Fasti* Zephyrus is a rapist he rapes Chloris (*Fast*. 5. 201-204). Perhaps this allusion to the change of wind is indicating the rapes that are to follow, for three rapes occur in Book 2 after this change of breeze.

constellation Aquarius. Jupiter, king of gods is also a kidnapper and a rapist. Barchiesi discusses this episode in an effort to establish if this brief rape can have any impact on our interpretation of the praise given to Augustus by Ovid in the preceding lines.[15] Newlands argues that at the very least the Ganymede reference at the end of this passage can suggest an alternative reading of the overtly pro-Augustan flattery,[16] while Boyle suggests that this reference following the passage of praise is 'no accident'.[17] The conclusion that is reached by Barchiesi is, however, that the reader is left without 'any proof' that Ovid intended this passage to offer disrespect to the emperor.[18] Let us consider this claim.

By desiring and abducting Ganymede Jupiter displays supreme omnipotence. He is all powerful and his will cannot be deterred.[19] Such a comparison with Augustus could indeed be viewed as favourable, if it were not for the rape. Barchiesi asserts that the 'pederastic love affair…is not necessarily damaging'.[20] But this is not a love affair. It is a rape. The Ovidian narrator makes his view on rape clear in this passage during his comparison between Romulus and Augustus. While condemning the acts of Romulus, he asserts that Romulus raped wives (*Fast*. 2. 139), referring to the rape of the Sabine women. This act is described in contrast to the adultery laws established by Augustus (*Fast*. 2. 139-140). There is no tolerance or need for it in Augustan Rome. Yet, the role of Augustus is that of Jupiter on earth and the passage tells us that Jupiter himself is a rapist. Barchiesi refers to the work of Horace to assert that links made between Augustus, Jupiter and

[15] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 82.
[16] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 47.
[17] Boyle, A. J. 'Postscripts from the Edge: Exilic *Fasti* and Imperialised Rome', (1997), p. 9.
[18] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 83.
[19] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 82.
[20] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 82.

Ganymede need not be viewed in a negative light.[21] The poem specifically referred to is *Odes*. 4. 4. Barchiesi claims that 'if we measure Ovid's text against this standard'[22] there is no need to doubt the sincerity of Ovid's Augustan praise. But why should we measure Ovid's text against this poem and legitimately compare the poets' intent? There can be little doubt that Ovid knew of this poem. However the political time-lines and motivations for writing were immeasurably different between the two poets. It is likely that the poem of Horace may have served as motivation and inspiration for the Ovidian allusion. While the former might well be pro-Augustan, this is no reason to read the latter in the same way. Indeed the fact that Horace had originally linked Augustus with Ganymede and Jupiter in a pro-imperial piece would make it even more likely that Ovid, an out-of-favour, wayward, eventually-exiled poet, would want to satirise and manipulate this earlier piece.

In *Metamorphoses* the rape of Ganymede is told by the celebrated and talented singer Orpheus (*Met*. 10. 155-162). Orpheus is the famed poet whose words control birds and beasts and trees and stones to follow (*Met.* 11. 1-20). Yet his songs are the cause of his demise and at the moment of death his words, for the first time, fail him (*Met.* 11. 45-46). The poet is punished for and abandoned by his words. This is an all too familiar story for Ovid the poet who actually was punished for his own words. So here in his *Fasti* Ovid alludes to that which he, through Orpheus, had previously told, the rape of Ganymede by Jupiter. The *Fasti* allusion to the rape of Ganymede is, however, merely that, an allusion. It consists of four lines at the end of a passage that is overtly pro-Augustan. Perhaps read in isolation this brief inter-text could not be seen to be

[21] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 83.
[22] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 83.

subverting and contradicting the praise. What directly follows however, is a second rape and a second recast. This rape is given a much longer treatment and it is this passage which drives forward the metaphor of rape and power accompanied by restriction of speech. This is the rape of Callisto.

Callisto is raped by the *pater deus* Jupiter (*Fast*. 2. 153-193). Callisto was a virgin companion and follower of Jupiter's daughter, Diana. She was, in fact the *princeps* of these priestesses, a term which clearly links her to the emperor (*Fast*. 2. 160). She is also the bear guard, a constellation, a star. (*Fast*. 2. 153-154). Gee asserts that Julius Caesar, after his deification by Augustus, is himself 'in the region of the bears, where rulers should be'.[23] By introducing this myth as such Ovid has made a further link between the raped Callisto and the Caesars. Caesar and the raped Callisto are both the recipients of catasterisation, yet while Caesar was raised to the heavens by virtue of deed, Callisto has ascended by rape.[24]

The raped Callisto, we are told: *cavit mortales*, *de Iove crimen habet* 'she was wary of mortal men, she had her crime from Jove'. (*Fast*. 2. 163). Callisto, having sworn an oath of virginity and fidelity to Diana (*Fast*. 2. 159-160), is powerless to flee the rapacious might of Jupiter: *invito est pectore passa Iovem* 'against her will she suffered Jove'. (*Fast*. 2. 178). Like Ganymede, it is the beauty of Callisto that was her undoing. Ovid tells us that this rape would not have happened if she had not been so attractive (*Fast*. 2. 161). This information provides the reader with

[23] Gee, E. *Ovid, Aratus and Augustus*, (2000), p. 173.
[24] Gee, E. *Ovid, Aratus and Augustus*, (2000), p. 183.

knowledge of the motivation behind this rape. Jupiter was attracted to Callisto and so he raped her.

Johnson asserts that because Callisto is raped she is 'punished by the world'.[25] In a very real sense she is. When Callisto's pregnancy is made evident to Diana, she is shunned by the goddess without need or cause for an explanation. More tellingly, she is told never again to befoul the pure waters (*Fast.* 2. 173-175). Curran discusses the psychological trauma of the woman deeply committed to a position of sexual integrity being forced to endure rape.[26] Raped and isolated, the once foresworn virgin, pregnant Callisto becomes a mother. But Juno ensures that Callisto is further punished. Callisto is transformed into a bear by Juno who exclaims: "*huius in amplexus Iuppiter*" *inquit* "*eat*!" 'She said, "Jupiter, go to her now!" ' (*Fast.* 2. 180). de Luce claims that Juno acts in this manner, in rage, so that she feels powerful rather than rejected.[27] If this is the case, it is a regular occurrence for Juno, vengeful wife of the philandering rapist Jupiter. Callisto is raped by a male but punished by a female. The notorious lust of Jupiter was well documented in ancient mythology.[28] Juno was perhaps equally well known as his bitter and vengeful wife. She bestowed cruel punishments on both the women who found themselves victim to Jupiter's lust and on the children who were inevitably produced as a result. Callisto is further punished. She is stripped of her human form and of the ability to speak. It is not Jupiter who causes this cruel transformation, rather it is the habitually vindictive and vengeful Juno. Angered by what she viewed as her husband's continued adultery, Juno punishes all those with whom her husband

[25] Johnson, W. R. 'The rapes of Callisto', (1996), p. 20.
[26] Curran, L. 'Rape and Rape Victims in the *Metamorphoses*', (1984), p. 279.
[27] de Luce, J. 'O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing: A Footnote on Metamorphosis, Silence and Power', (1993), p. 313.
[28] Curran, L. 'Rape and Rape Victims in the *Metamorphoses*', (1984), p. 278. Jupiter is the 'greatest womanizer in ancient mythology'.

is sexually active. Juno is not concerned with the details, the guilt or the outcome. To her Callisto's innocence is irrelevant.

As further punishment, Ovid tells us that Callisto the bear encounters her son, Arcas, a young hunter fifteen years after his birth. Callisto cannot even speak to save her life (*Fast*. 2. 185-186). Ovid links the violation and abuse of the female body with an inability to speak.[29] Spear raised, the son would have killed the mother but Jupiter intervenes and they are catasterised (*Fast*. 2. 186). de Luce views this salvation by Jupiter as a further affirmation and assertion of male dominance rather than an act of compassion.[30] Yet even as a star Callisto is chased by her hunter son, unable to ever sink into the oceans and ritually purify herself. Mirroring the banishment from pure waters by Diana, Callisto is eternally denied these cleansing rites (*Fast*. 2. 190-192). Callisto is never again allowed to be pure.[31]

The Ovidian narrator himself intervenes within this text, providing us with his opinion, for he asks why the transformation of Callisto was necessary: *quid facis? invito est pectore passa Iovem*. 'Why? Against her will she suffered Jove'. (*Fast*. 2. 178). The innocence of Callisto is heightened by this line.[32] Johnson argues that the innocence and suffering of Callisto are made evident by the injustices that repeatedly strip away her identity until she is gone.[33] So too Curran asserts that rape can remove a sense of self, meaning and purpose for a woman, robbing her of

[29] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time,* (1995), p. 157.
[30] de Luce, J. 'O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing: A Footnote on Metamorphosis, Silence and Power', (1993), p. 313.
[31] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time,* (1995), p. 157.
[32] Johnson, W. R. 'The rapes of Callisto', (1996), p. 16.
[33] Johnson, W. R. 'The rapes of Callisto', (1996), p. 19.

her identity.[34] As a result of this rape, Callisto is punished by her world. Let us investigate the act of rape: *cavit mortales, de Iove crimen habet.* (*Fast*. 2. 162). There are two ways that this line could be translated, and with each different translation the blame shifts between the two genders. The first, and inaccurate 'superpatriarchal'[35] translation does not take into account male blame when translating the word *crimen*: 'she was wary of mortal men, she committed her crime with Jove'. This translation suggests the guilt belongs to Callisto. It implies that she took an oath of virginity, stayed faithful to this oath with mortal men, but acted criminally with Jupiter. A second translation: 'she was wary of mortal men, she had her crime from Jove' passes blame to the male by attributing guilt onto the perpetrator of the crime. In the case of a blameless victim, Callisto has not committed a crime, rather she has had one committed against her, she has been violated. The crime, *crimen,* far from belonging to the female, must in this case be owned by the male.

The rape of Callisto represents absolute power and the links between those in power and the restriction of speech. Callisto, as further punishment for being raped by Jupiter, has her physical shape altered. Callisto is turned into a bear. Her human form is changed and along with this transformation she loses the ability to speak and to communicate. She is dehumanised. Callisto is, in the words of Johnson, 'transformed into an animal by the wife of the male who treated her as an animal'.[36] In this episode it is the all-powerful, the gods, who control speech and action. The rape, the silencing and harm inflicted on Callisto by Jupiter and Juno begin a formula that continues throughout Book 2 and into Book 3. Two powerful figures assault and weaken these four rape victims. In each case the speech and liberty of the rape victim is taken away by two

[34] Curran, L. 'Rape and Rape Victims in the *Metamorphoses*', (1984), pp. 276-277.
[35] Johnson, W. R. 'The rapes of Callisto', (1996), p. 15.
[36] Johnson, W. R. 'The rapes of Callisto', (1996), p. 21.

powerful characters. This rape and harm inflicted by not one, but two attackers, highlight the victim's helplessness, and emphasise her weakness, while also demonstrating the ultimate strength and power of the aggressor. In the case of Callisto it is Juno and Jupiter; for Lara, Mercury and Jupiter; for Lucretia, Sextus Tarquinius and Brutus; and for Rhea Silvia it is Mars and her uncle Amulius. In each of these four cases the woman's rape is accompanied by further harm or degradation. Each woman is raped, and each woman is punished, harmed and silenced, every time by two powerful figures.

A question that often arises in relation to the myths and legends selected by Ovid is why he chose to repeat, at times in lengthy detail, stories already told in earlier works. There is no single answer to this question. One possibility is that these myths are included to serve an intertextual purpose. Ovid wanted his readers to make connections between his works. In *Metamorphoses* the Callisto rape (*Met*. 2. 404-530) occurs within a series of almost formulaic rapes of nymphs by gods. The formula is constructed as a series of rapes of nymphs by gods; a god espies a nymph, desires her, chases her. The nymph is then either raped or metamorphosed or both. This is a pattern of mythological rapes that includes the rape of Callisto. The Callisto story in *Fasti* 2 is a rape story that could quite easily have been transposed into this section of rapes present in *Metamorphoses*. This rape (*Fast*. 2. 153-192) serves as a direct reference, a small scale example of the collection of nymph rapes found in *Metamorphoses*. By repeating the Callisto story the poet has invited and encouraged comparison between the two works. A comparison of the two Callisto myths has thereby in turn opened avenues of comparison between all of the rapes in *Metamorphoses* Books 1-5 and the Callisto rape in *Fasti* 2. Such comparison between the rape from *Fasti* and this series of rapes from *Metamorphoses* is possible because of the extensive

similarities between the two Callisto myths. The only notable difference between these stories exists in their length and detail. While the *Metamorphoses* is elaborate in its descriptions, and is much more detailed in its events, the *Fasti* version is a condensed account of the same story. Both contain the same facts and the major components of the story do not change.

Ovid's word usage is highly suggestive of a link between the two episodes. Gee states that the words used by Ovid in *Fasti* to describe the metamorphosis of Callisto recall the subject matter of *Metamorphoses*: *formam mutatque puellae* 'she changes the body of the girl' (*Fast*. 2. 177).[37] Readers of *Fasti* are thereby encouraged to make a link back to their previous encounter with the nymph Callisto in the *Metamorphoses*, a work highlighting changes in form (*Met*. 1. 1, *Tristia*, 1. 7. 13). The *Fasti* episode is not only designed to work alongside the *Metamorphoses* but it is, perhaps, also designed to work with it and to combine as one story. The purpose of this allusion and intertextuality is that new material is made available for the reader of *Fasti.* The reader can bring into this rape all of the rape imagery from the early books of the *Metamorphoses.* Now all of the rape stories from *Metamorphoses* are condensed in this one rape in *Fasti*, condensed in the sense that they need not be retold. As a parallel to the *Metamorphoses*, the Callisto rape from *Fasti* is no longer an isolated rape story, it becomes many. This is made possible because the rape, along with all of the early rapes from *Metamorphoses* contains a highly recognisable formula, that of desire, chase, rape and silencing.[38] These myths also share a common theme. The speech and actions of the weaker, subordinate person are every time controlled and silenced by

[37] Gee, E. *Ovid, Aratus and Augustus*, (2000), p.181.
[38] Stirrup, B. E. 'Techniques of Rape: Variety of Wit in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*', (1977), p. 170. 'The stories… all deal with the same basic theme, that of a god intent on rape; all include a journey and a metamorphosis. Similar stylistic devices are employed and literary and linguistic irony, mock-heroic techniques, visual descriptions…are recurrent features'.

the stronger. This sharing of content is a very useful textual tool. In *Fasti* 2, by using a story he has already told in *Metamorphoses*, Ovid encouraged, almost forced, readers to make a comparison between these two episodes. After this connection has been made, the similarity of these myths compels a reader to make a connection with the other rape stories. This poetic strategy has enabled Ovid to introduce a great deal of information and new material supporting his theme of speech and silence into the text of *Fasti* 2. This material serves to strengthen the thematic development of the concept of freedom of speech.

The story of Callisto acts as a bridge within Book 2. This myth makes firm the linkage between Augustus and Jupiter as the rapist of Ganymede. Both a rape and catasterisation myth, the legend of Callisto flows seamlessly on from the Ganymede allusion. The damage for the ruler who is likened to the supreme *pater deus* is done. Augustus to this point, is likened, albeit surreptitiously, to the pedophile and rapist Jupiter. She was chosen and raped by Jupiter and as a result, her life ended. Physically Callisto lived on as a bear and then as a star, yet her human life and her life as a mother was brutally snatched from her. The theme of speech being ripped from a rape victim as brutally as her virginity is introduced spectacularly with the myth of Callisto. Inevitably such a powerful theme would be continued, and it is. But in typical Ovidian style we are presented with somewhat of an interlude first.

Positioned between the rapes of Callisto and Lara, Ovid tells the aetiology of the Lupercalia, the name given to a festival in honour of the she-wolf who suckled Romulus and Remus (*Fast*. 2. 423-424). At this time, also, are the rites of Faunus (*Fast*. 2. 267). It is here that Ovid presents one of three tales of attempted and failed rape occurring within *Fasti*. This unsuccessful

endeavour is the Hercules transvestite episode (*Fast*. 2. 303-358). The strongly apparent theme among the rape stories of Book 2 is that the rape victims are each time weaker and less powerful than and easily silenced by their attackers. Each of the rape victims is a woman. This is the story of the attempted (albeit unintentional) rape of Hercules by Faunus. The tone is set for this story right from the start. It is an aetiological tale of sorts, explaining why Faunus does not like clothing (*Fast*. 2. 303). It is, we are told, an old joke, handed down through the years: *traditur antiqui fabula plena ioci* (*Fast*. 2. 304). This tale begins with Faunus spying on and becoming inflamed by Omphale as she walked with Hercules (*Fast*. 2. 305-311). Once in Bacchus' grove, and safely inside the privacy of a cave, the two lovers begin a hilarious display of dress and undress (*Fast*. 2. 312-330). Hercules is dressed by Omphale in her clothing; ripping her clothes, shoes and bracelets as he endeavours to complete his transvestite transformation. She in turn dresses in the famous lion skin and it is in these clothes that they eventually sleep. The result is unsurprisingly comical. Faunus sneaks in attempting to rape Omphale. In the darkness he feels for her clothing and makes the dire mistake of attempting rape on Hercules (*Fast*. 2. 331-350). This story illustrates to readers what happens, in *Fasti*, when the rapist or would be rapist is weaker than his victim. Faunus is the sexual aggressor in this story and unlike the successful rapists, he works alone. It is his victim who has an accomplice. The rules have been changed. Hercules and Omphale have swapped clothing, and are peacefully sleeping when Faunus makes the perilous error of attempting to rape the person dressed in Omphale's clothes. This person is Hercules and the rape of Omphale is, of course, unsuccessful. The rapist, acting alone, unknowingly attempts an attack far beyond his means and fails immediately.

Speech is raised within this rape attempt and those with the ability and inability to speak in this myth are telling. This time the female, the potential victim has the power of speech, Omphale calls for her attendants (*Fast*. 2. 351). The power of speech is granted to the intended victim or victims when they are more powerful than their attacker. Laughter as an element of speech is also highlighted in this episode as both Hercules and Omphale consider the humour of the situation and laugh freely (*Fast*. 2. 355-6). In this scenario the unsuccessful rape is humorous because the attacker is weaker and is, according to the rules that dictate rape in *Fasti* 2, unable to succeed. The hilarity of Faunus attempting to rape, unbeknown to him, Hercules a man much more powerful than he is, is highlighted by the comical tone of the passage. Hercules the transvestite easily overcomes the much weaker, would-be rapist Faunus. This failed attempt is, as the narrator promised, a good-natured joke because any violence is prevented.[39]

Speech is an integral element of the rape and power metaphor constructed in *Fasti* 2. Ovid gives a variety of perspectives on rape before presenting the politically important rapes. The second rape victim is Lara. Prior to commencing the story of Lara, however, Ovid introduces us to the rites of Tacita, the silent goddess (*Fast*. 2. 571-582). We are given an insight into these rites, performed by an old woman among many younger. The old woman performs the ceremony to the silent goddess, although we are told: *nec tamen ipsa tacet* 'though she herself is not silent' (*Fast*. 2. 572). The result of this ritual is that these women have, as the older woman declares, restricted unfavourable speech: *hostiles linguas inimicaque vinximus ora*, 'we have bound fast hostile tongues and unfriendly speech'. (*Fast*. 2. 581). This passage sets the tone for the Lara episode. A hostile tongue can be bound.

[39] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p.159.

protinus a nobis, quae sit dea Muta, requires? 'At once you will ask who is the goddess Muta?' (*Fast.* 2. 583). This question, posed by Ovid, is a calculated means by which the poet can introduce the story of Lara. Why are we asking about the goddess Muta? Actually we were not. But Ovid ensures that we now are. Perhaps she is to be identified with the goddess Tacita whose rites we have just witnessed. What is clear is that within *Fasti's* framework of speech and silence, a goddess who is mute, introduced directly following a ceremony to bind hostile speech, will be of interest to the thematic development of this book. What follows is the story of Jupiter and his planned rape of the nymph Juturna. We are told that Jupiter gathered together all the nymphs and convinced them to act as co-conspirators to his crime (*Fast*. 2. 585-598). Ovid then introduces his readers to a nymph named Lara (*Fast*. 2. 599). This nymph betrays Jupiter to Juturna, telling the nymph to flee and hide from the god (*Fast*. 2. 604). Lara is even so bold as to pay a visit to Juno to reveal her husband's planned attack (*Fast*. 2. 605-606). Whether angered by the loss of his rape victim or the revelation to his wife, Jupiter is enraged and rips our Lara's tongue (*Fast.* 2. 608). It becomes clear to the reader that Lara is the goddess Muta.

Lara, the narrator informs his readers, was originally named Lala. This name highlighted, Ovid asserts, her talkative nature. The name Lala was most likely derived from the Greek *lalein*, meaning to prattle or chatter.[40] Lara, as her original name suggested, is connected with unrestrained speech. We are presented with a warning, given by Almo the river god to Lara, warning her to restrict her free speech (*Fast*. 2. 601-602). Unable to hold her tongue, she has it

[40]Frazer, J. G. Ovid *Fasti*, (1929), p. 453. 'Lala if derived from the Greek *lalein* "to talk, prattle" would mean "the talker, the prattler" '.

ripped from her mouth (*Fast*. 2. 608). This is a brutal and horrific tale of mutilation. Lara is punished for her speech, physically mutilated and sent to live in the underworld:

> Iuppiter intumuit, quaque est non usa modeste,
> eripit huic linguam Mercuriumque vocat:
> "duc hanc ad manes; locus ille silentibus aptus.
> nympha, sed infernae nympha paludis erit." (*Fast*. 2. 607-610)
> 'Jupiter enraged and ripped from her the tongue that she had used without restraint, he called for Mercury: "Lead her to the place of the dead that is fitting for the silent. She is a nymph, but she will be a nymph of the underworld marshes" '.

In a display of ultimate dominance and supreme anger, the incensed Jupiter rips Lara's tongue from her mouth. This act of disfigurement and rage is only the beginning of the tragedy for Lara. Lara is raped by Mercury during their journey to the underworld. In an act of unspeakable depravity, Mercury is sexually aroused by the mutilation of Lara. He is aroused not only by her disfigurement but also by the absolute, unwavering power he holds over the silent, defenceless nymph. Mercury rapes Lara because she is mute. Lara, without speech instead pleads tacitly with her looks. These attempts are futile in *Fasti* 2, in a world where speech equates to power.[41] Lara is raped:

> vim parat hic, voltu pro verbis illa precatur
> et frustra muto nititur ore loqui. (*Fast*. 2. 613-4)
> 'He prepares force, she pleads with looks instead of words and her mute lips struggle in vain to speak'.

The rape of Lara is an Ovidian creation. There is no evidence of this rape prior to the *Fasti* account.[42] There is a parallel myth, however, the legend of Procne, Philomela and Tereus. It would seem that Ovid has recreated the myth he himself had told extensively in *Metamorphoses*

[41] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 160.
[42] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 160. 'Ovid seems to have invented the Roman myth of Lara himself on the model of the myth of Procne, Philomela and Tereus'.

(*Met*. 6. 424-699). A devastating tale of abduction, rape, mutilation and murder, this myth of carnal savagery is chillingly reconstructed in the story of Lara. The *Fasti* rape incident is told in seventeen lines. It is a straightforward and direct account. It is perhaps this brevity that increases its atrocity. There is so much detail withheld that a reader visualises the only other version of this myth that is available to them. The Philomela rape is graphic and explicit. The rape of Lara in *Fasti*, therefore, serves a similar intertextual function to story of *Fasti* Callisto. The Lara story introduces external material into the text. Again rape material from *Metamorphoses* is driven into *Fasti.* The rape of Lara is vicious in itself but for a reader of Ovid it would be almost impossible to read this myth without recognising its origin myth of Philomela. The viciousness is thus increased when it is linked directly with another myth of disfigurement and rape.[43] This intertextuality serves to heighten the intensity of not one but now two brutal rapes included in the *Fasti* 2 succession of rape and silence.

This intertextuality also invites comparison between the characters, for unlike the Callisto myth, the Lara story introduced new characters into the text of *Fasti*. The characters, Philomela and Tereus, fit seamlessly the stereotype of victim and attacker that is developed throughout Book 2. The victim is female, subordinate, weaker and easily silenced. The attacker is male, superior, stronger and has free speech. It is interesting and important to note one significant difference between the stories. Ovid in the recreation of this myth chose to make his new, Roman Tereus unaccountable for his actions. While the original Tereus is punished for his crimes, Jupiter and Mercury remain unpunished. They are victorious. In *Fasti* those who are able to silence others are

[43] (*Fast*. 2. 629), (*Fast*. 2. 855)

untouchable. While the child of Tereus is cooked and eaten in a manner reminiscent of sacrifice[44] as a punishment and Tereus himself is metamorphosed, the children of the rapist Mercury are, according to *Fasti*, the household gods of Romans. The use of repetition, of stories told and retold, stresses the cycle of violence, rape and the perpetual silencing of the victim.

There are two disturbing similarities between these two stories. The most obvious similarity between the myths is the mutilation suffered by the female rape victim. Both Philomela and Lara have their tongues removed to prevent them from speaking against the perpetrator of this violence. In the case of Philomela her tongue is removed to prevent her revealing the truth. In the case of Lara it is as a punishment for having done so. Both women are punished for their speech. The second, perhaps even more horrific similarity, is the lust felt by both Tereus and Mercury as a response to the mutilation of the victim. For both men the mutilated, silent woman becomes an object of sexual desire. In *Metamorphoses* after cutting the tongue from Philomela's mouth Tereus rapes the bleeding Philomela again;

> hoc quoque post facinus vix ausim credere fertur
> saepe sua lacerum repetisse libidine corpus. (*Met*. 6. 561-562)
> 'And even after he had done this, it is hard to believe, he is said to have taken her repeatedly, her savaged body causing his lust'.

So too in *Fasti* Mercury lusts for and rapes his prisoner. This version while less graphic, demonstrates the same act:

> iussa Iovis fiunt. accepit lucus euntes:
> dicitur illa duci tum placuisse deo. (*Fast*. 2. 611-612)

[44] While Ovid does not make explicit the murder of Itys as a sacrifice, the imagery is highly suggestive. A knife is used and the boy's throat is cut then his body is divided up into different parts before being served as a meal to an unknowing parent (*Met*. 636-646). This imagery is recalled by Seneca in *Thyestes* where the deaths of Thyestes' children are in no uncertain terms a sacrifice, with Seneca describing a sacrificial altar complete with knife, sacrificial wine and salt for the ritual. (*Thyestes* 682-689).

> ‘The orders of Jove were obeyed. On the way they came to a grove it is said that she pleased her divine guide’.

Not only are these women punished for their speech, they are also desired for their mutilation.

The myth of Lara serves a twofold purpose in the context of the calendar that is *Fasti*. It explains the origins of the goddess Muta, in conjunction with the rites of the goddess Tacita. It is also an aetiological myth, detailing the creation of the Lares. The Lares, traditionally twin guardians of the Roman hearth, are given a brutal and violent mythology by Ovid’s skilfully manufactured aetiology of their conception and birth.[45] Richlin, in her description of the rape of Lara asserts that this rape has a positive outcome: ‘one…ends well, since Lara gives birth to twins’.[46] This judgement is clearly mistaken. It is in fact this unhappy ending that Ovid encourages his readers to associate with the Lares. In Roman mythology the Lares Compitales were the twin watchers of the household and the crossroad, and it is with these figures that Augustus chose to represent his own *genius* (*Fast*. 5. 145-146). Ovid seized upon this appropriation by the Emperor and re-invented the aetiology of the Lares to become the children of the raped Lara. This aetiology strongly thrusts Augustus into the arena of speech and silence. The Lares are the product of mutilation, lust and rape. Newlands asserts that by linking this cult restored, indeed used directly by Augustus, with a fictitious act of rape, violence and suppression of speech, that Ovid is making a subtle but definite link with the Emperor and freedom of speech.[47]

[45] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time,* (1995), p. 160. ‘A grim tale of mutilation, rape and silence told as an aetion of the Roman Lares’.
[46] Richlin, A. ‘Reading Ovid’s Rapes’, (1992), p. 169.
[47] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time,* (1995), p. 161. Newlands asserts: ‘by attaching the story of Lara to a cult that Augustus restored, Ovid subtly suggests the emperor’s authority over freedom of speech…the Lares commemorate an act of violence and the power of divine authority to restrict speech’.

Any such link could not be viewed as a favourable connection. The most notorious feature of the rape myth of Philomela and thus of Lara, is the loss of their tongues. The loss of a tongue entails the loss of the ability to speak. By attaching this invented aetiology of the Lares to the cult images with which Augustus connected himself, Ovid linked Augustus with figures who by divine or autocratic authority had the power to restrict speech in a brutal and inhumane manner. The Lares are the product of a rape and represent the power of those in supreme authority to restrict speech.[48] Speech and the conditions of speech imposed upon Romans by Augustan rule are an issue of deep interest within *Fasti*.[49]

The manufactured aition of the Lares is intended to shock and surprise Ovid's readers.[50] What are the origins of these gods? Ovid reveals the answer in Book 5. We are told that the length of time has destroyed many things (*Fast*. 5. 131-132). What the narrator can reveal is that these figures were originally represented with a dog between their feet, standing as house gods and guardians of the crossroads (*Fast*. 5. 135-142). The Ovidian narrator tells us that he has searched for remaining images of these three statues, but to no avail, for they have all vanished (*Fast*. 5. 143-144). What the poet can reveal is that Rome is the home of many thousands of new Lares, together with the genius of Augustus (*Fast*. 5. 145-146).[51] Here we are told nothing of Lara. Rather we are told that the ancient house guardians that protect Rome have been appropriated by the emperor as his own. Augustus has manipulated the history and aetiology of the Lares. Ovid, in the myth of Lara, has thus provided a different history for these gods. He provides a history

[48] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p.161.
[49] Feeney, D. C. '*si licet et fas est*: Ovid's *Fasti* and the Problem of Free Speech under the Principate', (1992), p. 9.
[50] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p.161.
[51] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 108.

that gives them a brutal, sexually violent past, not uncommon for a Roman founding legend. Yet this fictitious past has direct links and serious political connotations with the emperor and his regime.

Jupiter's rape of Callisto and her hideous transformation by Juno began the theme of dual attackers. The rape and silencing of Lara by Jupiter and Mercury follow and strengthen this precedent of rapist and collaborator. That this is a theme being consciously and intentionally presented by Ovid becomes clear through an analysis of the original Greek myth. In this myth Philomela is raped and silenced by one person alone. Tereus is the sole perpetrator of her suffering. In the *Fasti* version Lara is silenced and harmed by Jupiter and she is then raped by Mercury. What is the significance of this pattern? In the case of *Fasti* 2 it appears to be used by Ovid to highlight the absolute weakness and vulnerability of the victim whose body is abused twice by at least two people stronger than her. In this progression of four rapes the rapist and his accomplice work together both to rape and to silence the victim. It is also chillingly clear that this accomplice need not always be a male. In the case of Callisto it is a woman. The position of this woman, a goddess, holds significantly more power than her female victim.

The rape and attack of both Callisto and Lara, each in their unique way, bring to *Fasti* 2 a development of the themes of rape, silence and helplessness. They do this in two notable ways. Firstly, both myths convey an element of intertextuality with the *Metamorphoses*. This intertextuality draws into the *Fasti* extra rape myths that help to strengthen the thematic development of rape and silence. In the unlikely event that a reader of the *Fasti* Lara myth had overlooked the connection between this myth and its Greek original, directly following the Lara

rape, on the day of *Caristia* (paying homage to the family), an explicit reference is made to Tereus, Procne and Philomela (*Fast*. 2. 629). This reference highlights the crimes committed by all three, serving as an explicit reminder to the reader of the rape by Tereus and the murder of Itys by Procne and Philomela. In this passage we are told that homage is also to be paid to the Lares (*Fast*. 2. 634). The Lares who are, we have been instructed, the children of the Romanised Philomela. The link between Augustus and the Lares is further made with the author explaining that homage must be paid to the Lares and to the *patriae pater* 'Father of the Fatherland' (*Fast*. 2. 637).[52] This brief but important passage reinforces the themes raised and developed by the Lara myth. The Lares are present, Augustus is present and so too is the original Greek myth that inspired Ovid to create his Roman counterpart. Augustus finds himself deeply intertwined within the poetics of Ovid's *Fasti*.

To this point the rapes of Callisto and Lara have created a solid portrayal of women as victims of violent, sexual attack whose speech is brutally stolen. The two rape legends that follow, those of Lucretia and Rhea Silvia, are politically charged accounts of Roman past. These are women by whose rape significant events in Roman history were said to have occurred. The rape of vestal virgin Rhea Silvia precipitates the birth of Romulus and Remus, legendary founders of Rome. The rape of the matron Lucretia instigates and incites the action that brought about the creation of the Roman Republic. Both women are vessels of a kind. Their bodies are used for the creation of history. By their very nature both myths are socially and politically charged in a way that makes their treatment by Ovid all the more enticing and engaging. Ovid does not create these myths, nor

[52]Woodard, R. D. Ovid *Fasti*, (2000), p. 201. 'Ovid likely alludes to the images of the Genius of Augustus which were enshrined together with images of the Lares at Roman roadsides'.

does he deviate from their 'original' plotlines to any great extent. It is as though he has drawn out from these myths what is already there. What results is the representation of these rapes as integral components, vital in his culmination of themes depicting absolute power, rape, violence and above all, oppression and suppression of speech.

Ancient Rome had a bloody and violent mythological and legendary history. Each foundation myth brims with stories of rape, violence, murder or a combination of the three. Throughout *Fasti* rape is interwoven with Rome's mythic history.[53] One such legend is the founding of the Roman Republic, the expulsion of the Kings by Brutus. At the core of this story is the rape and subsequent suicide of the Roman matron Lucretia. The rape of Lucretia, linked inextricably with her suicide, was a story that held great significance in Rome.[54] Not only was Lucretia the epitome of a chaste, moral, noble Roman wife but she was also the instrument, her death was the catalyst that sparked the end of the monarchy in 509 BCE. The story of Lucretia, we are told by Donaldson, is not really one story at all, rather it is many stories that combine, in parts, to provide elements that make a whole.[55] Yet the Ovidian account of Lucretia's rape and suicide has definite and notable differences to that of Livy (Liv. 1. 57-60). Donaldson's argument concerned representing what he perceived to be the combined and amalgamated myth of Lucretia.[56] Ovid's piece is not a copy of Livy, nor can the two pieces be fitted seamlessly together. Ovid has written an episode that presents readers with an alternative to Livy's account of the rape and death of Lucretia. He has carefully selected bits and pieces of myth and legend and has chosen which elements of the Lucretia legend to represent, which parts to leave out and which aspects to

[53] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 160.
[54] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 147.
[55] Donaldson, I. *The Rapes of Lucretia*, (1982), p. 3.
[56] Donaldson, I. *The Rapes of Lucretia*, (1982), ch. 2.

emphasise. Unlike the Greek Callisto myth and the Ovidian Lara story, the legend of Lucretia would have, courtesy of Livy, been well known to Ovid's contemporary Romans. The messages and themes of this story are highly political and this rape story comes as a compelling and chilling climax to Book 2. Ovid makes his message clear: Lucretia is a symbol, a metaphor, for the rape and violation of Rome by its monarchy.[57]

In *Fasti* 2 every rape is also accompanied by some other, additional harm. The rape victim is, each time, further assaulted and degraded. This pattern continues with the rape of Lucretia. When a reader reaches the legend of the rape of Lucretia and the founding of the Roman Republic the person whom Ovid has represented as causing harm to the raped and dying Lucretia, is the much hailed Republican hero Brutus. Lucretia is first raped by Sextus Tarquinius, the son of the king (*Fast*. 2. 795-812). She is then shamelessly debased and degraded by Brutus who violently rips the knife from her dying body (*Fast*. 2. 838-839). Donaldson argues that knives play a central role in the legend of Lucretia.[58] First Lucretia is threatened by Sextus Tarquinius with a knife (*Fast*. 2. 795), then she uses a knife to take her life (*Fast*. 2. 831-832), then Brutus rips the same knife from her body using it as a symbol of tyranny (*Fast*. 2. 838-839). The knife, it appears, is a symbol of pain and death in this story. More than this, however, the knife is used to represent the power of speech. In this passage the holder of the knife holds the power of speech. Tarquinius holding the knife proclaims he that speaks is a Tarquin (*Fast*. 2. 796). Lucretia, who has been silent throughout the attack is able to tell of her rape because she has the knife hidden on her body (*Fast*. 2. 831). Finally Brutus, who has fooled all with his mock stupidity, is able to speak

[57] Donaldson, I. *The Rapes of Lucretia*, (1982), p. 9.
[58] Donaldson, I. *The Rapes of Lucretia*, (1982), p. 17.

once he has ripped the knife from the dying Lucretia (*Fast*. 2. 837-839). Those that hold the knife hold also the power of speech.

Is Brutus, founder of the Republic, just as guilty of physical exploitation and harm as the rapist Sextus Tarquinius? Brutus does not sexually penetrate Lucretia, but he does snatch something from her, and he publicly violates her body and uses her death for personal gain. Lucretia's body is physically raped by a man driven by his sexual lust. Her body is then raped and plundered a second time by a man driven by his lust for power. Lucretia is a 'sacrificial victim', a necessary casualty for the development of Rome.[59]

Newlands draws a connection between the characters of Sextus Tarquinius and Brutus.[60] This is a connection that is notably apparent within the Ovidian version of this myth. This avenue of comparison demonstrates that the similarities between the characters of these two men combined to make Lucretia a deadly victim of Roman power and politics. Ovid presents his readers with two politically driven men of equally repugnant characters.

A contemporary Roman familiar with not only the work of Livy but also with Republican founding legends would be aware of the role that the prince Sextus Tarquinius played in the rape and suicide of Lucretia. That this is a man whose character and behaviour is to be despised is evident. The death of Lucretia became the pretext for the Roman denunciation of monarchy in favour of Republic. It is not only Sextus Tarquinius who is portrayed in a negative light,

[59] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 154.
[60] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 154.

however, and it comes as no surprise that when Ovid introduces his readers to the King of Rome, father of Sextus Tarquinius, he is represented as being a strong, but unjust, ruthless and deceitful man:

> ultima Tarquinius Romanae gentis habebat
> regna, vir iniustus, fortis ad arma tamen.
> ceperat hic alias, alias everterat urbes,
> et Gabios turpi fecerat arte suos. (*Fast*. 2.687-690)
> 'Tarquinius was the last to rule the Roman people. An unjust man, nevertheless strong in warfare he had captured some cities, destroyed others and made Gabii his own by foul art'.

Ovid represents the last king of Rome as being a strong warrior who had built up the lands and territories of Rome at the cruel price of the destruction of others by unjust and excessive means. This depiction, while painting a picture of the King as an aggressor and a tyrant, serves a dual purpose. For then Ovid reveals to his readers the means by which Gabii was destroyed. The 'foul art' and deceit that forced the fall of Gabii were practiced by the son of the king. Sextus Tarquinius is not only equally as unjust as his father, but is also equally as cunning and deceitful. Here readers are witnesses to what Donaldson refers to as the 'rape of a country as well as the rape of a woman'.[61]

Sextus Tarquinius contrived a twofold plan to aid in the destruction of the Gabii. Part one of this plan involved infiltration through deceit, part two involved the analysis and interpretation of a vague sign of communication with his father. These two elements of his character are crucial. Sextus Tarquinius was skilled at deceit and at interpretation. To begin his plan to infiltrate the enemy camp, Sextus Tarquinius allowed himself to be badly beaten (*Fast*. 2. 696) in order that he

[61] Donaldson, I. *The Rapes of Lucretia*, (1982), p. 10.

could successfully tell the lie that his wounds had been inflicted upon him by his father king Tarquinius, and his brothers:

> hoc cupiant fratres Tarquiniusque pater,
> qui mea crudeli laceravit verbere terga. (*Fast*. 2. 694-695)
> 'This is what my brothers would desire and my father Tarquinius who lashed my back with the cruel whip'.

This is a man who is prepared to go to significant and painful means to achieve his aims. His acting skills, and skills of deceit allowed him to convince the leaders of the Gabii that his family had brutally beaten him (*Fast*. 2.693-5). This ploy works as effectively as Sextus had anticipated. Here Ovid presents a crucial representation of Sextus Tarquinius as a man who is skilled and cunning while also expertly able to interpret and understand the behaviour of others. Sextus Tarquinius is a deceitful and manipulative man.

Ovid reveals that Sextus Tarquinius, once he had infiltrated the camp of the Gabii, continued his manipulation and deceit until his plan finally came to fruition and Gabii was successfully beaten. We are told that the only means of communication between Sextus Tarquinius and his father the king that would not have raised suspicion was an obscure sign, the chopping off the heads of the lilies in a garden. On receiving this sign Sextus Tarquinius recognised the meaning, killed the leaders of the Gabii, and the city fell. Ovid, in his characterisation of Sextus Tarquinius, has painted the picture of a man very skilled at understanding and interpreting even the most obscure signs. In *Fasti* Sextus Tarquinius is a man prepared to endure pain to succeed. He is triumphant through a combination of his two keen abilities, interpretation and deceit.

Sextus Tarquinius, this cunning, resourceful soldier, is the man who rapes Lucretia. He is a warrior, skilled in deceit. Directly following this passage in which the reader is introduced to the character traits of Sextus Tarquinius, comes a representation of Brutus. Two character traits are emphasised in this depiction. These traits are the same as those held by Sextus Tarquinius. Ovid tells his readers a story about the background of Brutus. He witnessed the oracle at Delphi pronounce that the first person to kiss their mother would triumph (*Fast*. 2. 713-714). Brutus, we are told, is the only man who managed to correctly understand this ambiguous message. While the other men misinterpreted this message and rushed to kiss their own mothers (*Fast*. 2. 715-716), Brutus realised that the message required him to kiss the earth, the earth being the mother of all life (*Fast*. 2. 717-718). The deceptive nature of Brutus is revealed at this point. Aware that if he revealed his knowledge then his life may have been in danger, Brutus pretends to trip and fall to the ground. So in his deceit Brutus is the first to fulfil the oracle's prophecy. What this passage reveals is that Brutus is just as skilled in interpretation and deceit as Sextus Tarquinius. Both men are able to interpret obscure messages and both are able to figure a means to deceive in order to achieve their ends. A chilling attribute learned about Brutus from this episode is that he is willing to deceive in order to fulfil a lust and desire for power. For indeed, it was the promise of triumph, victory and power offered by the oracle that prompted Brutus' deceit.

These are the tales of two men both displaying comparable traits of deception, expert interpretation and the lust for power and position. These two passages are unmistakably intended to work together to make a connection between the actions of these two men. Ovid's version is not a simple re-telling of Livy. Rather he has carefully and diligently selected passages and events that suit the agenda of this sequence of rape stories within *Fasti* 2 and 3. The stories of

these two men as borrowed from Livy portray them as interpreters who are skilled in and willing to commit deceit in order to attain success. Ovid allows us to meet these two characters, and presents us with their character traits prior to the Lucretia rape episode. This allows his readers to form an opinion of the two men who are to become the violators of Lucretia. These men in turn cause and allow her to die. The important message that Ovid is presenting here to his readers is that these men will employ any means in order succeed.

During and after the act of rape, these similarities extend to their physical treatment of Lucretia. Both men use her body to meet and fulfil their lusts and desires. Sextus Tarquinius uses the body of Lucretia for the purpose of emotional and sexual gratification. Brutus uses her mutilated, raped, dead body as a propaganda tool in the instigation of the Republic. Tarquinius forcibly penetrates Lucretia's body in a brutal attack of sexual violence. Brutus reverses this act. Rather than penetrate her he viciously rips the knife out of her dying body. Tarquinius committed a private crime of extreme intimate violation. Brutus drags Lucretia, deformed and dying into the city in another act of extreme and this time public violation. Both men needed Lucretia to be silenced to achieve their goal. Tarquinius needed her to be silent and yielding so that he could rape her without repercussion and punishment. Brutus takes this element of silence one step further. He needed Lucretia to not only be silent but to be dead; totally and irrevocably silent. When dead and silent the body of Lucretia could be appropriated and manipulated to suit any desire. For the monarchy to be dispelled, for Brutus' revolution to succeed, he needed not a live raped woman, but the savaged bleeding corpse of a Roman matron.

To emphasise the relationship between the savagery of these two men towards Lucretia, in both instances Ovid uses the language of rape. In his bid to silence Lucretia, Sextus Tarquinius asserts that he will rape her and kill her if she cries out:

> "nil agis: eripiam" dixit "per crimina vitam".
> falsus adulterii testis adulter ero." (*Fast*. 2. 807-808)
> 'You can do nothing, I will snatch away your life through crime. I the adulterer will bear false witness to your adultery'.

This threat, made by Sextus Tarquinius is, in part, in fact a foreshadowing of what is to come. He does succeed in raping Lucretia and by this the consequence for Lucretia is death. Through the rape Sextus Tarquinius causes her life to end. For this powerful and emotive rape story, it is not surprising that the language used to describe an act of rape should invoke the word rape. *eripiam*, a compound of the verb *rapio* is used by Sextus Tarquinius, who tells Lucretia that he will snatch away her life. While this language calls to mind the word rape, that verb is only used explicitly to represent the actions of Brutus.

The verb *rapio* is used to describe the actions of Brutus, who viciously rips the knife from the dying, but not yet dead, Lucretia.

> Brutus adest tandemque animo sua nomina fallit
> fixaque semianimi corpore tela rapit. (*Fast.* 2. 837-8)
> 'Brutus came and then at last he belies his name and snatches the weapon from her half dead body'.

The use here of the verb *rapio* compels the reader to make a connection between this forceful display of violation and the rape scene that has just occurred. The use of the word 'rape' heightens the severity of this act, and links Brutus with the previous act of rape. The use of this language serves to sexualise the act. He is raping Lucretia for the second time publicly and

sadistically. Brutus is ferociously and without consent tearing out the knife, the phallic weapon that has been plunged deeply into her body. The language suggests an equivalence between the acts of both men.

The issue of consent and approval is relevant to both the rape of Lucretia by Sextus Tarquinius and the attack on her body by Brutus. In both cases Lucretia is silent. Lucretia cannot speak to prevent herself from being raped nor can she speak against the abuse of her body by Brutus. In this passage, it is again those men in positions of power who have the ability to control speech and to create female submission and silence. Sextus Tarquinius asserts his authority over speech immediately by declaring to Lucretia: *natus ait regis* "*Tarquiniusque loquor*!" 'I that speak am a Tarquinius and the king's son' (*Fast*. 2.796). Sextus Tarquinius sets the scene with this assertion. It is only he that speaks throughout this passage, Lucretia does not utter a word:

> illa nihil: neque enim vocem viresque loquendi
> aut aliquid toto pectore mentis habet. (*Fast*. 2.797-8)
> 'She said nothing: voice and the power of speech and thought itself fled from her heart'.

Speech itself is the enemy, is to be feared, in this episode. As Sextus Tarquinius coerces Lucretia into submission he asserts that if she cries out he will kill her and kill a male slave and will assert that they were caught together sexually (*Fast*. 2.807-809). Ovid presents Lucretia as being faced with an impossible, cruel choice. She understands that the word of a Tarquinius would be binding. It is Sextus Tarquinius who holds the power of speech and it is he and he alone who does speak. Unlike the Livian Lucretia who is marked by her eloquence[62] this Lucretia is rendered nearly entirely silent (*Fast*. 2. 819-830). She is barely able to speak, yet in her final act, it is speech that becomes the most powerful tool that Lucretia can possess.

[62] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 148.

> “hoc quoque Tarquinio debebimus? eloquar,” inquit,
> “eloquar infelix dedecus ipsa meum?”
> quaque potest, narrat. restabant ultima: flevit,
> et matronales erubuere genae (*Fast*. 2. 825-828)
> ‘ “Must I owe this to Tarquin as well?” She said. “Must I tell, with my lips my own disgrace?” She tells what she is able. The rest remained but she cried and tears spread on her matron cheeks’.

Her speech is a tool from which she gains the support and compassion of her husband and father. This speech is, however, extremely limited.

Lucretia commits suicide and but now she is deprived of speech for the very last time. This time she is deprived of speech and approval by the appropriation and interpretation of her bloodied, raped and dying body by Brutus. Having ripped the knife from the still alive yet silent Lucretia, Brutus declared loudly and publicly that by her blood he would ensure that Tarquinius is punished for his crime (*Fast*. 2. 841-843). Lucretia herself is unable to offer her approval or support for this declaration. The Livian Lucretia declared that her rape and death must be avenged by her family (Liv. 1. 60). The Ovidian Lucretia has no sentiments of revenge, she was only filled with grief and despair. Brutus, master of interpretation, must have been able to read something, some approval from her dying body.

> illa iacens ad verba oculos sine lumine movit
> visaque concussa dicta probare coma (*Fast*. 2. 845-846)
> ‘At these words she moved her lightless eyes as she lay and she seemed, by the moving of her hair to approve of the speech’.

The eyes of the dead cannot move. We are told that Lucretia’s eyes are *sine lumine* they are without light. And to whom does it seem, *visaque*, that her hair has moved in approval? The hair of even the dead can move in the breeze. Here yet again Brutus is able to gain from the dead Lucretia what he could never have received from the live, raped woman: unresisting approval for his campaign to remove the monarchy.

Brutus was the initiator of this Republic and the man who brought about the end of the monarchy. Ovid has represented Brutus as being just as destructive a man, just as cunning, greedy and deceitful as the man he chose to overthrow. Ovid writes that the rape of Lucretia saw the end of the monarchy in Rome: *dies regnis illa suprema fuit*. 'This was the last day of kingly rule'. (*Fast*. 2. 852). This line is directly followed by a four line transition apparently concerning the change of season, beginning with the word *fallimur* – 'or do I err?' (*Fast*. 2. 853). This word in *Fasti* in its original form would have immediately followed on from the previous line, in fact making this passage read: that was the last day of kingly rule, or do I err? There can be little doubt that this subtle language device can be pointing at the new regime of Augustus, who while styling himself as *princeps* had declared himself to be the restorer of the Roman Republic (*R.G*. 1.1). This brief and passing question causes a link to be made between Augustus and the two men from the Lucretia rape myth and to rape and rapists. To further add to this connection, the last couplet of this transition is a reference to Procne and Tereus (*Fast*. 2. 855-856). This reference associates the Lara myth with the rape of Lucretia. They are both rapes including suppression of speech. The myth of Lara, as previously discussed, involved the conception and birth of the Lares, household gods associated with images of Augustus himself. In a subtle and creative manner, Ovid has managed throughout these rape stories to inter-weave concepts and ideas that link the suppression and restriction of speech and the use of rape and violence, with the Emperor Augustus.

February ends, spectacularly and dramatically with the rape of Lucretia. There are but twelve lines that remain in Book 2 after the rape and death of Lucretia, four of these make pointed

political references to the Emperor and his regime. The remaining eight begin the introduction of Mars' month. March begins where February finishes, with a rape. This is to be the last in this sequence of rape, speech and silence and it involves another two characters of great significance to Roman mythology and historical legend, Mars and Rhea Silvia. The rape of Rhea Silvia is unusual. It is perhaps surprising that this rape has been included by Richlin on her list of *raptae* for this, like the rape of Callisto, is non-violent.[63] In fact the Vestal Virgin is raped while she is asleep and has no knowledge of the event (*Fast.* 3. 11-24). When she awakes it is from a deep sleep after having an unusual dream involving her uncle, Mars' bird, a she-wolf and twin trees (*Fast.* 3. 25-40). Readers of Ovid with knowledge of the myth concerning Rhea Silvia, a myth that would presumably have been widespread, would have put together the elements of this somewhat obscure dream, quite nicely (Liv. 1. 4. 1-9). However Rhea Silvia herself remained ignorant of the rape and was thus oblivious to the fact that she was pregnant with the twin sons of Mars.

This rape comes as somewhat of an anti-climax after the violence and drama of the Lucretia myth. The rape of Rhea Silvia is subtle, Ovid does not even use the language of rape, the verb *rapio* is conspicuously absent in this scenario. However, what his readers are presented with is Mars being depicted as the epitome of supreme power. Mars sees her, desires her and takes her (*Fast.* 3. 21). It is, for this god, a matter of taking all that he desires, which in this case is the virgin Rhea Silvia. A notable feature of Rhea Silvia in this episode is her silence. She is asleep. She is therefore exposed as being vulnerable and unaware of the divine rape. She does not speak during this episode, as she is even unaware that it is occurring. She is entirely powerless and is

[63] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992), pp. 169-172.

thus rendered incapable of speech. Only once she has woken does Rhea Silvia speak to recall and wonder at her dream (*Fast*. 3. 27-38). This dream makes Rhea Silvia afraid yet she does not, cannot, know why. Mars does not need to use force with Rhea Silvia. She is in a position of extreme vulnerability and it is this vulnerability that arouses the god.

In breaking from the pattern that occurs throughout this sequence, Ovid does not narrate or even mention the punishment that is inflicted upon Rhea Silvia. All the reader is told is that her uncle Amulius, furious that she had given birth, ordered the twin boys drowned in a stream (*Fast*. 3. 49-51). This may be punishment enough. The mythology of Rhea Silvia, due to her position as the mother of Romulus, would have been well known. The story of the birth of Romulus and Remus had been told by Livy who claimed the punishment of Rhea Silvia was imprisonment by her uncle (Liv. 1. 4. 3). No further information is given about the fate of Rhea Silvia although the traditional means by which Vestal Virgins were punished for losing their virginity was to be entombed alive (Plut. *Num*.10). Whether or not this was the fate of Rhea Silvia is unclear. However, a reader of Ovid with knowledge of Livy will know that Rhea Silvia was imprisoned for her crime. In this episode the second assailant is Amulius the uncle of Rhea Silvia. Through allusion to the myth of Rhea Silvia in Livy, Ovid has provided his readers with necessary links to access material that they require to ascertain the identity of Rhea Silvia's second assailant.

The inclusion of this rape as the last in this progression of rape stories is significant for it features Rhea Silvia as a rape victim and describes the father of Romulus as a rapist and Romulus as the product of rape. Rhea Silvia is given no opportunity to defend herself against this rape, physically or verbally, for she is subjected to it while she is asleep and powerless. This image of the sleeping

woman preyed upon by the god of war brings to a head the concept of those with divine or absolute power. In *Fasti* 2 and 3 men who are in a superior and dominant position can take whatever it is that they want or desire from women who are in an inferior, subordinate position. The sleeping vestal virgin was raped by the god of war simply because he desired her. This episode presents us with an image of the violation of a weak and vulnerable innocent.

The rape of Rhea Silvia is not the rape of a non-descript Greek nymph. It is this rape that creates Romulus, founder of Rome. This is an important legend for Rome, a city founded on a rape and then, later, on the fratricide carried out by the son of this rapist. This fratricide is not absent from the mind of readers of this passage for we are told that Rhea Silvia grew heavy with Remus and with Romulus (*Fast*. 3. 41). Romulus was a key figure in Augustan ideology and propaganda but there could never be any denying that as a figure his history was problematic.[64] In *Fasti* 2 and 3 Ovid has built up a chain of rape stories, involving repression of speech, violence and oppression of the victim by superior, powerful figures. The father of Romulus is one of these figures. Ovid was reminding his readers about the mythology of their own founding legend, a legend born from the rape of a defenceless virgin. There appears to be no glory in this act.

These four rape stories form a powerful sequence that spans Book 2 to the beginning of Book 3. There can be little doubt that the theme of this passage is that of speech and its regulation and restriction. The stories Ovid chose as the Roman myths in this section all make some link with significant Roman figures: the Lares, Lucretia and Rhea Silvia. Ovid was drawing the attention of

[64] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), ch. 4. Hinds, S. '*Arma* in Ovid's *Fasti*: Part 2 Genre, Romulean Rome and Augustan Ideology', (1992), pp. 113-149.

his readers towards the myths that lay behind two significant founding legends, to the female victims who became the mothers of Rome. Romulus was a figure used by Augustus in his propaganda regime and a statue of this god was present in the Forum of Augustus.[65] The death of Lucretia, raped by the son of the last king of Rome, is 'vindicated' by Brutus the creator of the Republic. Augustus styled himself as the restorer of the Roman Republic while in actuality creating a monarchy. The irony of this is not lost on Ovid. For a poet exiled partially for a poem, for something he had written and spoken, the concept of freedom and restriction of speech is conspicuously evident. *Fasti* was not complete before the poet's exile and elements of the work clearly show this. Suppression of the weak by the strong, the silencing of the powerless by the powerful is, in *Fasti*, representative of the position the poet found himself in after his exile. Like the rape victims of Rome Ovid was powerless to stop his 'rape' caused, like that of Lara, by his indiscreet speech.

[65] Ramage, A. and Ramage, N. H. *Roman Art*, (1995), p. 90.

Chapter Two
The Mourning Mother: Ceres and the Search for Persephone

Persephone is twice raped within the Ovidian corpus, once in the *Metamorphoses* and once in *Fasti*. The first rape (*Met*. 5.385) occurs in the Ovidian epic depicting tales of change and bodily transformation. This rape is narrated by Calliope, chief of the nine muses (Hesiod *Th*. 79-80) and the muse most often associated with both epic and elegiac poetry.[66] The rape appears in the form of the song sung by the Muses during their story-telling competition with the Pierides (*Met*. 5.294ff). The second rape occurs within the aetiological *Fasti* and is told by the Ovidian narrator during his description of the Cerialia, festival of the goddess Ceres (*Fast*. 4. 417-620). Scholars referring to the second rape have often remarked negatively and with surprise at its inclusion in the *Fasti* text.[67] Such criticism centres upon the inclusion of the rape of Persephone within a work about the Roman calendar. The unusual choice of the Persephone rape episode needs to be considered within the broader context of this work. *Fasti* is a poem indisputably strewn with odd and unusual stories, notably those concerning women and rape. The Persephone episode is no more surprising or irrelevant than other Greek rape myths Romanised and included within this work.[68] These inclusions within this purportedly Roman calendar can each be read as surprising and unusual. The *Fasti* Persephone rape, therefore, does not stand alone as an odd inclusion within this poem. Indeed the inclusion of any and all of these Romanised rapes is worthy of

[66] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), pp. 75-76.
[67] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 105.
[68] Examples of such inclusions are the rapes of: Callisto (*Fast*. 2.153-192), Europa (*Fast*. 6. 603-620) or the failed rape of Omphale (*Fast*. 2. 303-358).

investigation. It is, however, the transition toward this episode rather than the content of the passage itself that has sparked most criticism and query.[69] Bayet in response to the transition has labelled it as odd and shocking.[70] The transition may be abrupt but is it shocking? I would argue that this and the inclusion of the Persephone myth far from being shocking are entirely relevant and meaningful to the *Fasti* text.

In order to reach this conclusion it is necessary to investigate the origins of the Persephone Ceres mythology. One of the most useful early sources (for both ancient and modern scholars) relating to this myth is the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (*HH*. 2),[71] a poem of around 700BCE depicting the aetiological mythology of the Eleusinian mysteries.[72] In this work we are told that the goddess Demeter, having revealed her true divine identity to Metanira, ordered a temple be built in which she would teach the Eleusinian people her sacred rites (*HH*. 2. 268-280).[73] This instruction occurs within the context of Demeter's search for her daughter. It can, therefore, be reasonably accepted that these ancient religious rites were connected with Demeter's loss of and her search for Persephone. It has been suggested that these rites may also have been in some way connected with the divine roles of both Demeter and Persephone as vegetation, corn and earth goddesses.[74]

[69] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 75. Barchiesi discusses the contentiousness of this inclusion within the *Fasti* text.
[70] Bayet, J. (1971), p. 105. As cited by Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 75.
[71] All translations of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* are taken from *The Homeric Hymns*, translated by Athanassakis, A. N. (1976).
[72] Greene, W. C. 'The Return of Persephone', (1946), p. 105.
[73] Evans, N. 'Sanctuaries, Sacrifices and the Eleusinian Mysteries', (2002). Mylonas, G. E. 'Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries', (1947).
[74] Greene, W.C. 'The Return of Persephone', (1946), p. 105. Persephone (or the Latin Proserpina) is a goddess often associated in classical mythology with the Greek corn goddess Kore. Greene suggests that these rites were connected with the positions of both Persephone and her mother Demeter and their roles as goddesses of the crops.

The *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* tells the story of the abduction and rape of the child Persephone by her uncle Dis (*HH*. 2. 16-19). Artworks including statues and vase illustrations from ancient Greece representing the child Persephone and her rape have been dated from at least the sixth century BCE.[75] An image of the child Persephone alongside Demeter and the goddess Hecate is depicted on the East Pediment of the Parthenon frieze.[76] Evidence suggests that the representation found here and elsewhere on vase paintings depicts Persephone being approached and greeted by Hecate.[77] Edwards asserts that this depiction demonstrated Persephone's return from the underworld to her mother.[78] Such archaeological evidence would suggest that the myth concerning Persephone's abduction and eventual return was well known and visually represented in classical Greece. This notion is reinforced by Euripides in *Suppliants* where reference is made to Demeter, Persephone and the cult of Eleusinian Mysteries (*Supp*. 33, 64, 93, 268, 290).[79]

Demeter was a distinctly Greek deity, her Roman counterpart being Ceres.[80] While sharing many of Demeter's qualities, Ceres did have her own ancient Italian aetiology.[81] Despite this, since antiquity, the two goddesses have been largely assimilated.[82] While the origins of Demeter and Ceres were initially separate, over time much of their mythology became interconnected. In Latin mythology therefore, the rape of Persephone and the search for her by her mother Demeter became the search by Ceres for her daughter Persephone (often called Proserpina). Latin authors

[75] Kane, S. 'An Archaic Kore from Cyrene', (1980), p. 183.
[76] Edwards, C.M. 'The Running Maiden from Eleusis and the Early Classical Image of Hecate', (1986), p. 307.
[77] Edwards, C. M. 'The Running Maiden from Eleusis and the Early Classical Image of Hecate', (1986), p. 307.
[78] Edwards, C. M. 'The Running Maiden from Eleusis and the Early Classical Image of Hecate', (1986), p. 307.
[79] Evans, N. 'Sanctuaries, Sacrifices and the Eleusinian Mysteries', (2002). Mylonas, G. E. 'Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries', (2002), p. 238.
[80] Evans, N. 'Sanctuaries, Sacrifices and the Eleusinian Mysteries', (2002). Mylonas, G. E. 'Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries', (2002), p. 238.
[81]Woodard, R.D. Ovid *Fasti*, (2000), p. 243.
[82] Altheim, F. *A History of Roman Religion*, (1938), p. 120.

adopted this mythology and Ovid was no exception. He found a place for the rape of Persephone and the search for her by Ceres within the Cerialia festival in his *Fasti* (*Fast*. 4. 393-620). In Greece the origin of the Eleusinian Mysteries was connected to the tale of the rape of Persephone. It may have been that the games of Ceres were to Rome the equivalent of the Greek Eleusinian Mysteries. In other words, the rape of Persephone could have been told by Ovid as an explanation for the aetiology behind the games of Ceres.

Ovid tells his readers that there is no need for him to narrate the reason behind the games. He suggests that the services of the goddess speak for themselves:

> hinc Cereris ludi. non est opus indice causae;
> sponte deae munus promeritumque patet. (*Fast*. 4. 393-394)
> 'Next will come the games of Ceres. There is no need to tell the cause; the gifts and services of the goddess are clear'.

It is during the passage on these games, however, that Ovid tells us that he needs to reveal the story of the raped Persephone (*Fast*. 4. 417). In Roman times links were made between a Romanised version of the Eleusinian Mysteries celebrated on the Aventine (est. 493 BCE) and the games of Ceres that later became a prominent feature of the Cerialia.[83] It may be that Ovid was making reference to such a connection suggesting that the aetiology of this festival, like that of the Eleusinian Mysteries, lay with the rape of Persephone.[84] If this is the case then the rape of *Fasti* Persephone could be represented as being intrinsic to the Cerialia. Barchiesi asks if and how the Persephone story is essential to the poetic task of narrating the Cerialia.[85] An answer to

[83] Altheim, F. *A History of Roman Religion*, (1938), pp. 268-270.
[84] Stanley Spaeth, B. *The Roman Goddess Ceres*, (1996), p. 21.
[85] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), pp. 75-76.

this question could be that in *Fasti* the aetiology of the Cerialia is linked with the aetiology of the Eleusinian Mysteries, the rape and return of Persephone.

The *Fasti* Persephone passage is introduced by the Ovidian narrator who instructs his readers that the place (presumably the place within the text) calls for him to retell the rape of Persephone, *exigit ipse locus, raptus ut virginis edam* 'the place demands that I narrate the rape of the virgin' (*Fast.* 4. 417). Barchiesi asserts that readers of *Fasti* would not understand the need for this inclusion were it not for what he calls 'Ovid's emphatic statement'[86] on the necessity of this narration. This emphatic statement on the need for the passage attempts to legitimise its place within the text. In terms of the stated poetic aims of *Fasti* this passage does little to satisfy the requirements (*Fast.* 1. 1-2). This narrative digression does not (directly) provide detail about the Cerialia or about any other Roman rite or ritual. It is concerned with describing, for the second time, a myth detailing the abduction and rape of Persephone. Barchiesi noted that a number of scholars critiquing this episode appeared unenthused regarding the interruption of the Cerialia festival with what many view to be an unnecessary discourse.[87] I would, however, question the distinction between necessary and unnecessary in regard to the placement of specific narratives and myths. Certainly, the way in which the Persephone rape myth is included into the Cerialia appears to be abrupt and sudden. But the place which Ovid refers to as being necessary for this inclusion, the festival of Ceres (mother of Persephone), can be viewed as an extremely appropriate place for its inclusion. Indeed if one is to argue that the aetiology of the Cerialia is as a result of Ceres' loss of and search for Persephone then this place would be a fitting and indeed,

[86] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), pp. 75-6.
[87] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), pp. 75-76.

as Ovid has argued, a necessary place for its inclusion. The Cerialia does appear to be a far more appropriate setting for this telling than in a tale within a tale told by a muse in the *Metamorphoses* (*Met*. 5. 385ff). The inclusion of the Persephone rape into the *Fasti* text seems more readily justifiable within a discussion about the aetiology of the festival of Ceres, the mother of Persephone, than as a tale told by a muse narrator within a work on mythological transformations.

Before any discussion on legitimacy of placement can meaningfully occur, there is one element of the Persephone myth that needs to be clarified. Persephone is raped. She is not merely abducted by her uncle, she is kidnapped and raped. This point is made by Ovid in both his *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* by the use of words constructed from the verb *rapio* (*Met*. 5. 395, *Fast*. 4. 417, *Fast*. 4. 525). In Ovidian poetry, derivatives of this verb are often used to describe rape. Examples highlighting this usage are widespread throughout the Ovidian corpus: Chloris *rapinae* (*Fast*. 5. 203) and Philomela *rapiam* (*Met*. 6. 618). In fact this verb tends to be reserved, by Ovid at least, for acts of extreme sexual and physical violence. It is necessary to outline and clarify the fact of Persephone's rape, because it is neglected or overlooked by many scholars. Few Ovidian scholars pay much or indeed any attention to this rape even in discussions about rape within Ovidian texts. Richlin in her discussion of the rapes of *Fasti* neglects to mention or acknowledge the rape of Persephone.[88] It is difficult to ascertain why this may be, perhaps, because the rape itself is not explicitly narrated. This is also the case for the vast majority of Ovidian rapes. Ovid uses carefully selected words rather than overt and graphic descriptions to make his meanings

[88] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992).

clear. Whatever the reasoning, Persephone is left off Richlin's list of Ovidian *raptae*.[89] Yet it is demonstrably clear that she should appear on her list. Ovid's word choice (*raptus* 4. 417, *raptam Fast*. 4. 525, *raptaque Met*. 5. 395) makes it apparent that in both of the texts Persephone, a young innocent girl (*virginis Fast*. 4. 417) is raped by her powerful uncle.

Throughout the Ovidian corpus there are very few occasions when the poet composes and includes narration, especially lengthy narration twice on the same subject. Allusions are often made but retelling occurs rarely. When such retellings do occur they are immediately recognisable and appear designed to draw his readers' attention towards the repeated episode and those directly surrounding it. This is especially notable in the case of the two Callisto episodes (*Met*. 2. 404-530, *Fast*. 2. 153-192). The rape of Persephone and the ensuing lengthy search for her by Ceres are the central stories of both *Metamorphoses* 5 (*Met*. 5. 294-678) and *Fasti* 4 (*Fast*. 4. 417-620). It seems reasonable to assume therefore, that with this prominent re-telling Ovid is again drawing the attention of his readers towards this story. The questions that must be asked are what is Ovid making us aware of? What is the point of this repetition? What aspects of this or the surrounding text is Ovid wishing to emphasise? The clue to discovering the answer to these questions is given by Ovid who highlights linkage between this story and the *Metamorphoses*. It is the links that are being emphasised.

Ovid tantalises his readers with this fleeting link to the *Metamorphoses* at the beginning of the episode: *plura recognosces, pauca docendus eris* 'you will recognise much, you will learn a little' (*Fast*. 4. 418). In this line Ovid is reminding us that from our reading of the

[89] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992), pp. 169-172.

Metamorphoses Persephone rape we will recognise a lot of detail and information. He is at the same time instructing his readers that as well as recognition, we will also be learning something. He is indicating that in the *Fasti* version information will be presented that was absent in *Metamorphoses*. Barchiesi, discussing the words *pauca docendus* as Ovid's allusion to this story's parallel, asserts that the phrase also highlights Ovid's departure from the didactic aims of the poem. Despite using instructive teaching language, this story will largely be a repetition with very little new information or knowledge imparted to his readers.[90] In his *Fasti* version Ovid is presenting his readers with information he expects they will already know, information that indeed he is counting on his readers to know. Without this information the linkage between the two works will be lost. There is a twist to this repetition and Ovid tells us that he will be adding small bits of new material, for those inclined to pass the episode over as a direct retelling. Readers of this new version are rewarded, for it is this small amount of new information that holds the key to the inclusion of this story within this passage and indeed within Book 4 as a whole. It is the new material that is significant. It is the differences not the similarities that are important. Scholars have long made attempts to compare the similarities within these works. Hinds refers to the two Persephone stories as 'twin episodes'.[91] If these stories are twins, they are certainly not identical. Rather than focus on the similar material in both works, Ovid, as narrator, has instructed his readers to recognise and appreciate the differences between them. An investigation into these differences is significant in understanding the reasoning behind the inclusion of this rape narrative within the *Fasti*.

[90] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 76. '*pauca docendus* alludes not only to the existence of a clearly visible parallel…but also the self-evident departure from any didactic aim…this diegetical repetition has little or nothing to teach…as a…work on the calendar'.
[91] Hinds, S. *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse*, (1987), p. xii. 'the twin Persephone episodes constitute a remarkable exercise in extended cross-reference'.

Before any successful attempt can be made to investigate the number and the significance of the differences between the two versions, it is necessary first to understand and acknowledge the similarities. Hinds devoted a monograph to the investigation of these two stories and his work on the topic is influential.[92] He has suggested that the two versions should be viewed and critiqued as being poetic exercises in self-conscious and deliberate cross-reference.[93] This deliberate cross-referencing is, to a certain extent clear and apparent. The imagery surrounding the scene and place of abduction, the actual geographical location of Persephone's rape, are extremely similar within both works. The location near Henna in Sicily is the same in both poems. Here both texts find Persephone carefree and joyful, wandering the countryside picking flowers with her female companions:

> perpetuum ver est quo dum Proserpina luco
> ludit et aut violas aut candida lilia carpit. (*Met*. 5. 391-2)
> 'Spring is eternal. Here Proserpina was playing, gathering flowers, violets, or white lilies'.

> ipsa crocos tenues liliaque alba legit. (*Fast*. 4. 442)
> 'She herself collects delicate crocuses and white lilies'.

The abduction scene is also the same. Both accounts have Persephone wandering off alone, away from her friends into more secluded woodland. She is espied by her uncle Dis who snatches her away and takes her on his menacing, dark horses into the underworld:

> hanc videt et visam patruus velociter aufert
> regnaque caeruleis in sua portat equis. (*Fast*. 4. 445-6)
> 'Her uncle saw her and as soon as he saw her he bore her away, he carried her on his dark horses to his own kingdom'.

[92] Hinds, S. *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse* (1987).
[93] Hinds, S. *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse* (1987), p. 104. '[These two narratives should] first and foremost be treated as the remarkable exercise in cross-reference which they inevitably are…'

paene simul visa est dilectaque raptaque Diti
usque adeo est properatus amor. (*Met*. 5. 395-6)
'Almost at the same time she was seen and chosen and raped in Dis' hasty love'.

It is clear from both readings regarding the place and the act of abduction that this passage will not be the one that will provide readers with that promised piece of new information.

What these two Ovidian passages highlight for readers is not any semblance of difference rather it is a further link of similarity. This imagery is a parallel of the setting of Persephone's rape from the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*: 'She played with the full-bosomed daughters of Okeanos, gathering flowers, roses, crocuses and beautiful violets all over a soft meadow; irises too and hyacinths she picked, and narcissus…' (*HH*. 2. 5-8). So too the act of abduction from the *Homeric Hymn* is seen to echo in the words of Ovid: 'Earth with its wide roads gaped and then over the Nysian field the lord and all-receiver, the many-named son of Kronos, sprang upon her with his immortal horses. Against her will he seized her and on his golden chariot carried her away as she wailed; and she raised a shrill cry, calling upon her father Kronides, the highest and best' (*HH*. 2. 16-19). In all three stories the child Persephone is with maiden companions picking lovely spring flowers when she is seen by her uncle who snatches her away and carries her on his horses to his underworld realm. Indeed the one notably prominent diversion from the setting as narrated in the *Homeric Hymn,* that occurs in both the Ovidian versions is that while the *Homeric Hymn* Persephone cries out for her father (*HH*. 2. 21-24), both versions of the Ovidian Persephone call out for their mother (*Met*. 5. 396-398, *Fast*. 4. 447-8). This small but significant change serves as an important clue for the reader to develop an understanding that motherhood is the intrinsic concept addressed by *Fasti* 4. Acknowledgement of the similarities between the Ovidian versions and the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* is also important in an understanding of the

inclusion of this passage. Close reading of all three episodes reveals that Ovid worked closely with this and perhaps with other similar Greek texts.

The imagery and setting surrounding the rape and abduction of Persephone in both *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses* are indisputably alike. Both appear to be similar renditions of the same myth. However, this is as far as any likeness between these two episodes extends. All similarities between the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* versions cease after the somewhat brief description of physical location, setting and the act of abduction. Arguably, in both stories this is as far as Persephone herself features within either narrative. In terms of similarities concerning the actual rape of Persephone both texts are in agreement. It is with the journey and wanderings of Ceres searching for her lost child that the differences begin. The rapes of Persephone are similar enough to be 'twins' in both works. But in both versions the wanderings of Ceres differ vastly.

The *Metamorphoses* account of Ceres' search is, unsurprisingly, concerned with depicting tales of transformation. This story is viewed from an angle that represents and highlights incidents of metamorphosis including several tales relating to bodily transformation. Episodes concerning Arethusa and Cyane take up a substantial part of this narrative. The metamorphosis of Cyane into a stream is represented in this passage. This metamorphosis is emphasised as being the reason why Cyane is unable to relate to Ceres the fate of Persephone. Cyane is aware of the rape of Persephone and it is her protestations to Dis after the rape of Persephone that caused her own metamorphoses (*Met*. 5. 410-437, 463-469). The inability of Cyane to reveal the truth about Persephone leads inevitably to the lengthy and protracted search by Ceres for her lost child.

Metamorphoses' Ceres is a cruel, dominant and powerful goddess who exacts divine retribution on any who anger or insult her. In this passage readers are introduced to the ruthless and vindictive side of Ceres. A clear example of this behaviour is represented when Ceres, insulted by the jeering young boy, changes him into a newt by throwing her drink into his face (*Met*. 5. 450-460). The Ceres of *Metamorphoses* is bitter and vengeful. She is angry and despairing at the abduction and loss of her daughter. In this state Ceres wreaks havoc upon mortals, their land and livelihood. At this point in the poem rather than fulfil her traditional role as earth goddess, she demonstrates her divine wrath to farmers by wrecking their ploughs, pointlessly slaughtering cattle and killing the fruits of the earth (*Met*. 5. 475-486). She is only calmed by Arethusa who reveals to her the fate of Persephone (*Met*. 5. 503-510). *Metamorphoses*' Ceres cares only for the safety of her daughter. The safety of all others is insignificant to the point of total irrelevance to this goddess whose primary concern is finding her daughter and punishing any who stand in her way.

The Ceres of *Fasti* is not the same woman who blights the crops, slaughters the cattle and punishes the innocent in *Metamorphoses*. *Fasti's* Ceres is a distraught and grieving mother. In despair for the child she has lost this Ceres keeps true to her role as mother and nurturer. While finding Persephone is again the primary concern of this Ceres, it does not occur at the expense of any other. She becomes nursemaid to the dying infant Triptolemus and nurtures him back to health (*Fast*. 4. 549-560). In *Fasti*, Ceres wails for her lost child (*Fast*. 4. 482). Here Ovid conjures an image from one of the most tragic tales of mythology, one that is used throughout *Fasti* and one that is told in detail in *Metamorphoses*, the myth of Procne and Philomela (*Met*. 6. 424-699). Procne enraged by her the rape and abduction of her sister by her husband, murders

their own child Itys in revenge. Itys is saved by the gods and all three adults are metamorphosed into birds (*Met*. 6. 675-699). The imagery in the *Fasti* passage relates to the anguish of the mother whose child has died. Ovid tells the reader that Ceres wails for her child: *ut amissum cum gemit ales Ityn* 'just as the bird wails for lost Itys' (*Fast*. 4. 482). Hinds gives an intertextual explanation for this avian imagery. He suggests that this image of a bird is carried over from the *Homeric Hymn* where Demeter is represented as a bird in flight '…and rushed like a bird over the nourishing land and the sea, searching; but none of the gods or mortal men wanted to tell her the truth and none of the birds of omen came to her as truthful messengers'. (*HH*. 2. 43-46). He suggests that in *Fasti* this flight is turned into an image of grief. The grieving mother bird replaces the bird in flight searching desperately for her lost child.[94] While this argument is plausible and indeed logical it needs to be extended to discuss the other inclusions of the Procne and Philomela imagery within the *Fasti* text. The imagery of the Tereus, Procne and Philomela story is used throughout *Fasti* to highlight significant instances of tragedy, especially rape (*Fast*. 2. 629-30, *Fast*. 2. 855-856).[95] Perhaps Ovid aimed to combine this rape imagery alongside the image of the grieving bird from the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* to highlight the tragedy in terms of both the rape of Persephone and the loss of a child for Ceres.

The mythology of the Itys story is, however, problematic in this setting. It is difficult to reconcile the story of Procne and Itys with that of Ceres and Persephone in the context of this myth. Ovid had previously provided readers of *Metamorphoses* with a violent and graphic telling of this story

[94] Hinds, S. *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse*, (1987), p. 104. 'Persephone's mother is still envisaged as a bird, but the comparison which in the Hymn illustrated the goddesses' quick flight now illustrates her sad lamentation…'
[95] Notably (*Fast*. 2. 629-30) occurring after the rape of Lara and (*Fast*. 2. 855-856) occurring after the rape of Lucretia.

(*Met*. 6. 424-699). Allusions in *Fasti* 2 imply that the reader is expected to know the story. There could be little or no doubt that Ovidian readers would be familiar with this myth. It is difficult to comprehend in the context of *Fasti* how this myth, whereby a mother kills her son and feeds his meat to her husband as punishment, can be compared with the loss of Persephone by Ceres. Ceres has not killed her daughter, nor has she used her daughter in any way to seek vengeance against Persephone's father. Ceres while sharing the anguish and despair of Procne has not actively played a role in creating the situation of this grief. Why then would it be that a recollection of this myth is planted within the Ceres story? Perhaps the answer to this question must be that while there are differences and while those differences are stark, there are also, surprisingly, similarities.

The first and most obvious similarity is that there is a lost child in each myth. In both myths the loss of this child causes anguish to their mothers. Secondly, in both myths it is the father of the child who has caused, directly or indirectly, this loss. In both stories there is an abduction of a female by a male and in both stories this female is raped. While these similarities are clearly evident, in the context of each myth the stories are very different. Is one expected to make a comparison between Procne and Ceres? Both are mothers who have lost their children. Both have had a beloved family member abducted and raped. Both must suffer as a result of this rape. Or perhaps one is intended to contrast the two women, to contrast the mothers. The reader is invited into the lives of these two women. We are invited to contrast the different way each woman responds to and acts in the face of tragic and horrific rape and separation. While the response of the mortal Procne is anger and revenge, immortal Ceres seeks only to have her child returned. In *Fasti* Ovid paints the picture of a Ceres who could never resort to murder, especially of her own

child, even in a time of extreme anguish. The reference to Procne and Itys serves to provoke thought and to encourage the reader to compare the different predicaments of these two families.

Hinds suggested that his work was a journey to find the essential elements that combined to create the Ovidian Persephone. He asserted that he would strive and search carefully to find the true and complete 'Ovidian Persephone'.[96] Such a search is by no means unnecessary. But if any search for an Ovidian Persephone is relevant then it would seem that a search for the Ovidian Ceres would be of equal or indeed greater importance. The representations of Persephone in *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses* are quite brief, limited in detail and length. These representations are highly comparable between the two works, the imagery and events are very similar. In contrast with this similarity, representations of Ceres in both of these works are in stark opposition to each other. The two Ceres are opposites in both deed and action. The Ceres of *Metamorphoses* represents anger and cruel vengeance. The *Fasti* Ceres is a kind, giving, nurturing and maternal figure. Could it be then, that any search for an essential, whole, Ovidian Ceres would be impossible to visualise? The characteristics of these two women are vastly different, to the extent that they are not easily recognisable as being the same woman. While any search for the Ovidian Persephone may be relatively successful, any attempt to discern an Ovidian Ceres is a challenging and perhaps impossible task. This difficulty does not diminish the significance of the character or rather characters of the Ovidian Ceres. The differences in behaviour and character are much more intriguing than the similarities.

[96]Hinds, S. *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse*, (1987), p. xii. '[this work will] proceed with due care and literary tact in the quest, which it does not presume to complete, for the Ovidian Persephone'.

It is quite straightforward to acknowledge that there are differences between the two Ovidian Ceres. It is more difficult, though, to try to determine the reason or motivation behind the origin of these differences. It is the behaviour of the *Fasti* Ceres that gives the biggest clue. This Ceres is represented as being the epitome of motherhood. She is a grieving distraught mother who has lost her child; *perque vices modo* '*Persephone!*' *modo* '*filia!*' *clamat* 'Now she calls "Persephone!" then she calls "daughter!" ' (*Fast*. 4. 483). She desperately searches for Persephone day and night (*Fast*. 4. 489). She stops and frantically asks every person she meets if they have seen her daughter, to no avail (*Fast*. 4. 488) Persephone is lost. (*Fast*. 4. 487-501). Finally, totally desolate and defeated she sits as cold and motionless as the stone she sits upon: *hic primum sedit gelido maestissima saxo* 'there for the first time she sat down the most sorrowful on the icy stone' (*Fast*. 4. 503). Ovid is representing Ceres as having lost all hope. She sits *inmota* motionless or perhaps immovable (*Fast*. 4. 505). She is discovered by the unlikeliest of people, a child, a daughter but not her own (*Fast*. 4. 511-514). This child approaches her and calls her *mater* 'mother' (*Fast*. 4. 513). Ceres is touched and affected by this and when approached by the girl's father she reveals her loss and her sadness (*Fast*. 4. 515-528). The words of the father acknowledge the rape of Persephone for he refers to her as the *raptam* 'raped daughter' of Ceres (*Fast*. 4. 525). In this passage Ceres is a mother whose daughter has been raped and taken from her. She is a woman who is keenly aggrieved by this loss, she is in every sense a mother.

Ceres as *mater* is an appropriate and accurate summary of her behaviour throughout this whole episode. It seems natural and normal that she would take on the role of nursemaid to the dying infant Triptolemus. She has lost her child and wishes to ensure that the same does not happen to

Metanira (*Fast*. 4. 539-542). Her behaviour towards the child is perhaps not the normal behaviour of a human mother, but Ceres, though a mother, is not a human mother. Ovid does represent her as appearing to act kindly and with the genuine intentions of a compassionate care-giver. The care given by a god is different to that which would be given by a mortal (*Fast*. 4. 539-560). *Fasti's* Ceres is the mother of both the earth and of her daughter. This Ceres, unlike her *Metamorphoses* counterpart, does not and would not consider the destruction of her land and crops in favour of her child. Rather than express her grief through anger and revenge, she is represented as being filled with despair and lamentation. Rather than punish, Ceres chooses to nurture and restore life. *Fasti's* Ceres is first and foremost a grieving mother. This element of her character closely mirrors that of Demeter from the *Homeric Hymn*. 'A sharp pain gripped her heart, and she tore the headband round her divine hair with her own hands…' (*HH*. 2. 40-41). The role of Ceres is the same in both of these works. She acts, in both poems, as nursemaid to the dying Triptolemus.[97] Ovid is, in his *Fasti* Ceres, drawing upon material from the *Homeric Hymn* as inspiration for his character portrayal and development. This is not the Ceres from *Metamorphoses*, it is the mother goddess as described in the earlier Greek text.

While there is little doubt that the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* was used by Ovid as a source for his *Fasti* Hinds has asserted that this cannot have been his only source for inspiration and information regarding both rapes of Persephone.[98] Speculation about what these other sources could have been is, it appears, limited to an assumption that Ovid relied upon a version or

[97] Hinds, S. *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse*, (1987), p. 57. Hinds suggests that 'the overall impression gained is one of similarity: in the circumstances of the rape itself, in the hospitality and nursing of the child at Eleusis, in the finding of Persephone and in the resolution of the crisis'.
[98] Hinds, S. *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse*, (1987), pp. 52-53.

versions of the Persephone myth found in Callimachus of which only fragments remain.[99] Beyond this Hinds suggests it is probable that Ovid had also used at least one, or perhaps many, Hellenistic works that have since been lost.[100] This argument can perhaps help to explain one reason why the *Metamorphoses* account of the search by Ceres for Persephone differs so markedly from that of the *Fasti* account. The simple explanation to this query would be that Ovid has used different sources. Much of the information found in what we are to assume was the second version that Ovid had written, the *Fasti* version, can be found in the *Homeric Hymn*: for example the nurturing of Triptolemus (Demophoon in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*), and the encounter with his mother Metanira (*HH*. 2. 225-260). The Hymn seems to have provided very little of the material which is used by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses* version. The exceptions are, of course, the setting and the act of abduction. After the rape of Persephone by her uncle this poem does not appear, to any noticeable extent, to draw upon the *Homeric Hymn*. Perhaps much of the material used for *Metamorphoses* was provided by Callimachus and other stories from long lost Hellenistic poetry.

An option to consider is that Ovid created much of the material himself. Perhaps intending and wishing to deviate deliberately from traditional versions of the myth, Ovid may have constructed mythology to suit his own purpose and desire. There is evidence to suggest that Ovid had created

[99] Two fragments, 285 and 611, remain from Callimachus that refer to Persephone. Gelzer suggests that fragment 285 may demonstrate the Cult of Demeter '…and Deo, and the wife of Clymenus the hospitable'. The second fragment, 611, echoes the image of Ceres sitting alone, waiting for news of Persephone as depicted in *Fasti* 'you sat at the well Callichoron, without news of your child'. (Callimachus, trans. Whitman, C. 1975).

[100] Hinds, S. *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse*, (1987), p. 54. He asserts that 'it is indeed probable that some details at least of the two Ovidian accounts of the rape are coloured by the influence of lost Hellenistic poetry'.

mythology, an example of which is the myth of Lara and the Lares (*Fast*. 2. 583-614).[101] Both the *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses* versions of the Persephone myth occur within vastly difference contexts and are, it appears, both intended to serve and illustrate two very different purposes. Perhaps Ovid chose in his *Metamorphoses* to re-write the myth, to challenge traditional authorship on the subject. So too when creating the *Fasti* version, in a context of divine mothers, maybe Ovid decided to write his own version of the *Homeric Hymn*. He is a poet known for experimentation with genre and style with a desire to master different forms of poetry. It could be that Ovid may have chosen to craft his own *Homeric Hymn*.

To read the *Fasti* version as an Ovidian *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* or to appreciate that this work was a source of information and ideas, there is one episode that exists and is central to both of these works. In both poems the story of Metanira and Triptolemus and their interaction with Ceres is a key narration. For readers of *Fasti* this is the point in the text whereby they will have reached the new information promised to them by Ovid. Arguably this new material, in a comparison with the *Metamorphoses*, is not exactly the small amount promised by Ovid. It is, in fact, quite a lot. It seems as though it may have been more appropriate for Ovid to tell his readers that they would recognise a little but would learn a lot. Readers of this episode will learn about the role of Ceres as a mother and as a maternal care giver.

The concept integral to the *Fasti* (and the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*) story is motherhood and maternal instinct, actions and desires. The mythology of Persephone in the *Metamorphoses*, the *Fasti* and in the *Homeric Hymn* depicts the act of her abduction and rape. These rapes are clearly

[101] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 161.

central to any interpretation and understanding of the myth. But it is also the case in each of these stories that the author appears primarily concerned with representing the effect that the rape of the daughter has upon the mother. It would in fact be fair to say that the focus of these myths is the impact on the mother, rather than the actual rape victim. It is not the rape of Persephone that is focused upon. It is Ceres' search for Persephone that takes up the vast majority of the myth in both Ovidian works (and the *Homeric Hymn*). The grief of the mother is central to the mythology surrounding the rape of Persephone.

Motherhood is an unavoidable theme when interpreting the rape of Persephone. In *Fasti* Ovid has used this theme, so intrinsic to the myth and has developed it and taken the concept of motherhood and maternal grief and instinct one step further. The *Fasti* rape of Persephone and Ceres' ensuing search are set within the context of a book primarily concerned with representations of motherhood. Persephone, while being the rape victim, is not principally the main focus of the *Fasti* or indeed the *Metamorphoses* rape story. It is reasonable to suggest that one or both stories were included to highlight the actions and character of Ceres, not Persephone. In *Fasti* it is Ceres not Persephone who has the main focus during this story. It is her wanderings that receive most attention. The rape of Persephone is given 30 lines (*Fast*. 4. 425-454) while Ovid has devoted 160 lines to the search and wanderings of Ceres (*Fast*. 4. 455-615). It is the Cerialia, Ceres' own festival which was interrupted to tell this story. A story that the poet tells us needs to be told at that place in the calendar. It is here that an understanding of the *Fasti* Ceres can begin. This is an understanding of the place and significance of Ceres in Book 4. This understanding is integral to any interpretation or rationale that attempts to explain why the rape of Persephone was retold by Ovid in *Fasti* 4.

Within any work it is, of course, always important to read an episode within its context. This becomes especially pertinent in any work where episodes and stories are grouped together but appear unrelated. In *Fasti* an understanding of context becomes crucial to an understanding of the text. This is a work in which stories, myths and legends are interwoven throughout the work often with abrupt and apparently unconnected transitions. What is undoubtedly clear from a reading of this poem is that Ovid deliberately positioned stories together thematically within the months. These are often linked by either a common theme or character and it is only with a combination of two or more episodes that the theme of each book begins to become clear. In the case of the *Fasti* in order to understand the intent of one story, it is often necessary to examine those surrounding it so as to place it within its context in the work. It is more useful in this case, to attempt an understanding of a group of episodes rather than any one solitary story. It is seldom useful to separate an element or elements of text from their environment and intended meaning. In the case of *Fasti*, neighbouring and surrounding text plays an integral part in extrapolating meaning.[102]

The *Fasti* Persephone myth has long been a victim of such treatment. This myth has been read either in isolation from its surrounding text or again in isolation but as a comparison with either or both the *Homeric Hymn* and the tale from *Metamorphoses*. There is no need to deny that this myth can be compared and contrasted with both the *Metamorphoses* and the *Homeric Hymns*. Such treatment can only extend so far, however, and it is possibly fair to say that such comparisons have almost reached as far as they can go. Ovid did want to draw the attention of his

[102] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 17. Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 139. Both Newlands and Barchiesi assert that the *Fasti* should be read as an entire poetic text; as a whole rather than as isolated fragments.

readers to the fact that he was reproducing his own myth, with some changes. Our attention is drawn so that we can read these changes. But it is within the context of the *Fasti* not the *Metamorphoses* that these changes can and should be interpreted. What is really needed is for this Ceres story to be looked at within the context of *Fasti* 4. This context will reveal itself to readers as being a book thematically charged with tales of strong women, strong goddesses and strong mothers. The role of the mother is varied for these women, they are the mothers of agriculture, of cities, of races, of humans and of gods. It is apt then that the core story of this book represents a mother of a child in that role alone. In *Fasti* 4 Ovid presents Ceres in the context of this book of powerful women. Ceres is one of these mothers but she is represented as a woman rendered powerless, a mother whose child has been brutally snatched away.

The other women, the other mothers of *Fasti* 4, include Cybele and Rhea, both powerful mother goddesses. The story of Rhea and the birth of Jove are presented in this work and this story is a further link to the sacrifice of children by their fathers. This time it is a male child that is to be sacrificed and a female god acting as goddess and mother who saves him. Rhea, we are told, mourned her fertility and despised her pregnancy without childbirth (*Fast*. 4. 201-202). Saturnus did not wish to be castrated and overturned from his position as supreme god as he had done to his own father Uranus and thus he ate his own children. He was tricked into eating a stone rather than eat his last-born child Jove, thus the sacrifice was unsuccessful and Jove was born (*Fast*. 4. 205-210).

The Rhea episode occurs within a passage concerning the Phrygian goddess Cybele and her worship. Cybele was a goddess whose attendants were eunuchs, men who had been emasculated in the manner of Uranus. That her attendants were eunuchs is emphasised by Ovid: *ibunt*

semimares et inania tympana tundent 'the eunuchs will parade and will pound the hollow drums' (*Fast*. 4. 183). It was forbidden for a Roman male to be an attendant to Cybele, only Asiatic men were allowed to fulfil this role and with it the self-emasculation that was required in this position.[103] This mother goddess refuses to be served by any whole men after her betrayal by the boy Attis, her first eunuch (*Fast*. 4. 220-246). In contrast with this ideal, we are presented with the Roman view on castration from no less than the father of Jove himself. This man was prepared to be childless, to perpetually sacrifice children in order to retain his masculinity. Again in *Fasti* 4 Ovid presents his readers with a father prepared to sacrifice his child, this time for selfish gain. It is only the act of desperation and grief-filled deception by his mother that saves the baby Jove.

Mother goddesses dominate the content of Book 4. In light of this it is, perhaps, fitting that this book begins with the mother goddess who had been prominent for those living in Augustan Rome. This book begins with Venus, mother of Aeneas and therefore mother of the Roman race (*Fast*. 4. 1). April, Ovid tells us, is Venus' month (*Fast*. 4. 13-14). He suggests the name of the month has its roots in Venus' Greek name, Aphrodite (*Fast*. 4. 61-64). The positioning of this month next to March, the month named after Mars (*Fast*. 3. 4) is also worthy of comment by Ovid who suggests that April could be positioned as such because of the position of Mars and Venus as the parents of Rome. Venus and Mars are, he asserts, after all the mother and father of Aeneas and Romulus respectively (*Fast*. 4. 57-60). A reader of this passage could be forgiven for recalling the famous adultery between Mars and Venus, an element encouraged, perhaps, by the poet who tells his reader: *utque solet, Marti continuata suo est* 'and as usual she is joined with

[103]Woodard, R. D. Ovid *Fasti*, (2000), p. 237.

her Mars' (*Fast*. 4. 130). These inexplicit allusions are as far as the poet goes in this book, in terms of highlighting the adulterous side of Venus. The Venus in *Fasti* is not the sexualised adulteress of mythology. She is, for all intents and purposes, the very representation of the Augustan Venus. Ovid in this book presents his readers with Venus as the mother of the Roman race, the idealised Venus Genetrix. The mothers represented throughout this book, Venus, Cybele and Ceres, could quite easily be visualised by his readers as being the beautiful, maternal, fruitful women depicted on the walls of the *Ara Pacis Augustae*.[104] The women represented here are the very epitome of Augustan matronly propaganda.

The Venus of *Fasti* is, apparently, a kind and nurturing mother, she is: *alma geminorum mater amorum* 'gentle mother of the twin loves' (*Fast*. 4. 1). The imagery of this mother goddess recalls vividly the description of Venus presented by Lucretius in his opening passage of *de Rerum Natura*:

> Aeneadum genetrix, hominum divomque voluptas
> alma Venus (Lucr. 1. 1-2)
> 'Gentle Venus, mother of Aeneadae and delight of gods and men'. (Lucr. 1.1-2)

An Ovidian reader with knowledge of Lucretius would recognise this repetition immediately. Ovid introduces his readers to Venus in a voice that echoed Lucretius in tone and suggests Venus is a kind and gentle mother goddess. She is overtly and conspicuously represented as Venus Genetrix, the mother. Venus in this role could surely not help but to conjure in the minds of Romans the striking, new temple of Venus Genetrix that had been established within the forum of

[104] For representations and descriptions of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* see Ramage, A. & Ramage, N. H. *Roman Art*, (1995), pp. 99-105.

Julius Caesar.[105] How would Ovid have expected his readers to respond to this depiction? The first impression that this passage gives is that in the context of this work Venus will be represented as mother rather than lover. The goddess of love will here be neglecting this duty in favour of her motherly duty and her responsibility as creator and mother of the Roman race.

While it is clear that comparisons between the two works can be made, what is less clear is the reason behind this intertextual borrowing. What is the purpose of this connection? In both works Venus is mother, she is *genetrix*. Lucretius' description is not, of course, connected with Augustan propaganda. The same cannot be said for Ovid's description. A connection between the two works sets a precedent for the *Fasti*. As readers, in light of this connection, we are perhaps inclined to suppose that the Venus of this text will appear and behave in the same manner as the Lucretian Venus. The pretext of *Fasti* 4 will be established by Venus as she appeared in Lucretius. The tone is then set for readers who will assume that in this work Venus will not be sexualised, rather she will be represented as a mother, as a giver of life.

This assumption is reinforced by a parallel line from Ovid's *Amores*. This line also refers to Venus as the mother of the loves. Again she is mother, but she is mother of the loves (as in *Fasti*) and she is, in this context, the mother of Ovid's love elegies:

> quaere novum vatem tenerorum mater Amorum!
> raditur hic elegis ultima meta meis. (*Am*. 3. 15.1-2)
> 'Mother of the gentle loves seek a new poet! I have come to the last that will be scraped by my elegies'.

[105] Ramage, A. & Ramage, N. H. *Roman Art*, (1995), p. 144.

All three Venuses are depicted as being a mother. Both Ovidian Venuses are represented as being the mothers of Love, both women are the *mater amorum*. Ovid uses his own work here to make a direct and explicit repetition of the description of Venus. The Lucretian text provided a non-sexualised, maternal Venus as a basis for comparison with the *Fasti* goddess. However, this notion is challenged by a deliberate link made by the poet to his own work that represents Venus as being a mother, but a mother of love, a mother of Ovid's elegies. This poses a very real problem for a reading of the *Fasti* Venus as being a non-sexualised mother. Ovid, through contradictory intertextual borrowing, has thrown into disarray and confusion any solid representation of Venus in *Fasti* as being a gentle, non-sexual mother. The character of Venus in *Fasti* is going to be represented as a mother. This much, especially through the intertextual borrowing, is clear. But the nature and type of mother she will be is unclear and is placed under speculation. Will she be the divine Julian ancestor? Or will she be the sexual goddess of love?[106]

The scene for Book 4 is set, if somewhat confusingly, with Venus as some version of a mother goddess. By calling upon images from Lucretius and from his own *Amores* Ovid has centred Venus firmly within a framework focused on the role of mothers and mother goddesses. By introducing Venus into this context Ovid opened up an avenue by which Venus could be linked with the Ceres and Persephone myth. This linkage involves the reader recalling information, as they are virtually instructed to do, from earlier versions of the Persephone rape, including the

[106] The suggestion provided by Ovid for the reason behind the naming of the month April is telling. Venus has an older history, an older mythology than that relating to her Trojan and Julian position. A link is made here between Venus and Aphrodite the Greek goddess of sexual and erotic love.

Metamorphoses version. A reader of *Metamorphoses* will be aware that Venus herself was involved in this version of the myth.

In *Metamorphoses* Ovid gave Venus a role to play in the rape of Persephone. The role was not that of a nurturing, protecting mother, rather it was of a vindictive, vengeful goddess who incited the rape. In *Metamorphoses* Venus instigates the rape of Persephone because she is tired of being looked down on and despised by virgin goddesses (*Met*. 5. 365-384). Venus coerces her son Cupid to inflict Dis with an arrow of passion. It is this arrow that inflames him with lust and causes him to rape and abduct his niece, for this was the plan of Venus:

> '…Cereris quoque filia virgo,
> si patiemur, erit; nam spes adfectat easdem.
> at tu pro socio siqua est ea gratia regno
> iunge deam patruo' dixit Venus…(*Met*. 4. 376-379)
> ' "The daughter of Ceres will remain a virgin if we will allow her to have her current wishes. But you, for both our sakes, by any means possible, join the young goddess with her uncle", said Venus'.

Bitter and spiteful about her position among the gods, Venus cunningly plans and causes the rape of Persephone. The Venus of *Metamorphoses*, like the Ceres of *Metamorphoses*, is a cruel and angry goddess who uses her divine powers for her own gain and to exact revenge.

The Venus of *Fasti,* like the Ceres of *Fasti,* is a different woman. Indeed Venus is not present at the rape of Persephone. In this version of the myth the rape is caused by the lust and desire of Dis. No excuse is given for his behaviour, no divine cause is presented. Dis sees something that he wants and he takes it:

hanc videt et visam patruus velociter aufert
regnaque caeruleis in sua portat equis. (*Fast*. 4. 445-446)
'Her uncle saw her and as soon as he saw her he bore her away he carried her on his dark horses to his own kingdom'.

This passage echoes a line from another rape story from *Fasti*, the rape of the virgin Rhea Silvia by Mars (*Fast*. 3. 21). The god sees something that he wants and takes it. In this version there is no excuse provided for the rape, no justification, or blame shifting towards the female goddess. Dis is and must be held entirely responsible for the rape so that the Venus of this work is not represented negatively. Venus, as divine and nurturing mother cannot be implicated in the rape of a young child. Venus is conspicuously absent from Persephone's rape in *Fasti*.

Venus may not be given any lines in the *Fasti* rape but despite this, she is still implicated. Ovid made it clear from the outset that he expected his readers to be familiar with his earlier version of the myth. Readers of this episode will be aware of the role that Venus played in the rape of Persephone. Are we intended to assume that Venus is blameless in the *Fasti* scenario? If we are, as Ovid has suggested, to read these two stories as parallel episodes of the same story, then the role of Venus in the rape of Persephone cannot be overlooked. Just because Venus' role in the prelude to rape is absent from the text, does this mean that she did not cause it? Ovid may have intended that a reader of *Metamorphoses* would remember the cause of the rape in this work, and take this to a reading of the *Fasti* rape. This is a natural step for readers. Just because the prologue of Venus' discussion with Cupid is absent from the *Fasti* rape does not in fact mean we are to understand that it did not occur. This implicates Venus in the rape of a child. Such implications are highly problematic for any portrayal of this goddess as a nurturing, protecting mother. The cracks in this portrayal begin to appear with contradictory intertextual descriptions

of the goddess. These fissures in her character grow even more apparent with links that portray her as the mastermind behind the rape of a child. The idea of Venus as divine caring mother is, in this context, fatally flawed.

An intertextual reading of the Ovidian Persephone episodes has revealed the malicious role that Venus played in this rape. Ovid in developing the image of the maternal Venus used a parallel from Lucretius. It is unsurprising then that this is not the only reference to Lucretius that will be made by Ovid in this book. What is surprising is in the choice of image that Ovid recalled from *de Rerum Natura*. This image is an unusual choice. It is a passage written describing the unhappiness of a mother cow whose calf has been lost:

From Lucretius:

> at mater viridis saltus orbata peragrans
> quaerit humi pedibus vestigia pressa bisulcis,
> omnia convisens oculis loca, si queat usquam
> conspicere amissum fetum, completque querellis
> frondiferum nemus adsistens et crebra revisit
> ad stabulum desiderio perfixa iuvenci. (Lucr. 2. 355-361)
> 'But the bereaved mother scours through the green glade, she seeks on the ground for prints of the cloven hooves, as she looks in all places to see if she may see somewhere her lost child, stopping, she fills the leafy woods with her moaning and revisits the stable longing for her calf'.

It seems unlikely and unexpected that such a passage could find a fitting place within a discussion on divine and powerful mothers, yet somehow it does. This image is deliberately mirrored by Ovid in Book 4. The mother cow is used as a simile to describe the distraught Ceres, desperately searching for her lost child:

ut vitulo mugit sua mater ab ubere rapto[107]
et quaerit fetus per nemus omne suos :
sic dea nec retinet gemitus et concita cursu
fertur et a campis incipit, Henna, tuis.
inde puellaris nacta est vestigia plantae
et pressam noto pondere vidit humum. (*Fast*. 4. 459-464)
'Just as a mother cow whose calf has been snatched from her udder bellows and looks for her child through every grove, so the goddess did not restrain her moans and ran quickly beginning from your plains, Henna, then she was met with the prints of girlish feet and she saw the known marks in the ground'.

In this passage, Ceres becomes the mother cow from Lucretius, distressed and grief stricken after losing her child. Ceres is a cow, Persephone is a calf snatched away and the anguish of the mother, goddess or animal, is depicted through this intertextual connection.

Ovid reminds his readers that he is using Lucretian women, significantly, Lucretian mothers as the models for the prominent mothers of Book 4. The two women that Ovid has borrowed are Ceres and Venus. To emphasise this point further, following the Ceres story Ovid makes a link between Venus and a mother cow that can be interpreted to represent Ceres:

tertia post Veneris cum lux surrexerit Idus,
pontifices, forda sacra litate bove. (*Fast*. 4. 629-630)
'When the third dawn after the Ides of Venus will have come, give in sacrifice a pregnant cow'.

Ovid has deliberately taken two of the strong representations of mothers as described by Lucretius and has consciously and carefully used them in *Fasti* 4. The first is the powerful and quite rare representation of Venus as a mother. The second is the image of the distraught mother cow that he has transposed onto the myth of Ceres and Persephone.

[107] Note the use here of *rapto* a word that has conscious connotations in *Fasti* with rape.

Venus from *Fasti* 4 fits the stereotype of the Augustan Venus *genetrix* perfectly. It appears that she is everything that the Augustan propaganda regime would desire. This Venus is the compassionate, gentle mother of men and of Rome. But there are allusions that suggest that perhaps this overwhelmingly perfect character is too good to be true. Subtle but explicit links and suggestions remind the reader of her adulterous relationship with Mars. Significantly there is her role, or lack of role, in the Persephone rapes. A reader of *Metamorphoses* will naturally think of her vindictive, callous representation in that work. How is she to be perceived in *Fasti*? Is she the divine and nurturing, protecting mother of Lucretius? Or is she the manipulative Venus of *Metamorphoses* who provokes Dis to rape the child Persephone? It appears that Ovid is deliberately creating a confused, almost contradictory picture of Venus. In doing so he is, to an extent, removing an element of credibility from her as mother of Rome, who initially appears to be so kind and nurturing. Ovid is, perhaps, informing his reader of the way by which fact, especially mythological fact, can be manipulated and distorted to serve a specific purpose. The mother of Augustan Rome may be a Venus *genetrix*. In highlighting the positive, nurturing role of this goddess Ovid is drawing attention to the contradictions and problems behind the use of this goddess, known much more readily for her adultery than for her maternity.

Connections between *de Rerum Natura* and *Fasti* play an important role in helping readers to ascertain an understanding of nature of the women of Book 4. It is, of course, vital that when making any such connection that both episodes from the text be read within the context of the work that they are situated in. As previously discussed, with all texts any episode should not be read in isolation. When looking at the images from Lucretius, it is possible that Ovid intended his readers to be conscious of the passages surrounding these episodes.

In *de Rerum Natura* readers of the mother cow episode will have previously encountered a myth describing the grief and despair of a mother who has lost her child. This is the myth of Iphigenia who is sacrificed by her father Agamemnon (Lucr. 1. 84-101). The anger and revenge of Clytemnestra in response to her child's murder was infamous and was described in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. Ovidian readers would have been familiar with this myth and the lengths that a mother will go to when avenging her child's murder. Lucretius, while not discussing this anger and grief, describes the loss of Iphigenia as a sacrifice. She is a sacrificial offering to the gods and the pain of a mother losing a child by her own husband's hand is presented (Lucr. 1. 84-101).

The later image of the mother cow reveals itself to be linked with this chilling child sacrifice. The Lucretian calf has been taken to be killed as a sacrificial offering.[108] Certainly in both versions, the calf has been snatched away from her mother. How then, can all of these images link together: the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the lost baby calves and the rape of Persephone? They are all stories of loss. In each myth the mother is left, grief-stricken by the loss of her child. Persephone, while not suffering a physical death like Iphigenia is forcibly taken and kept in the underworld. A life in the underworld, the place of the dead, is tantamount to death itself. Both daughters are sacrificed, in a different manner, by their fathers. Both mothers are helpless and powerless to stop this sacrifice. A reader who identifies the mother cow and calf connection between *Fasti* 4 and

[108] nam saepe ante deum vitulus delubra decoral
Turicremas propter mactatus concidit aras
Sanguinis expirans calidum de pectore flumen. (*Lucr*. 2.352-354)
'For often in front of noble shrines of the gods, a calf falls slain beside the incense-burning altars, breathing up a hot stream of blood from its heart'.

Lucretius may indeed be prompted by these sacrificial images to recall the earlier Lucretian image of the sacrificed Iphigenia.

Ceres, represented by bovine imagery, is reduced in this episode to a position lacking in power. Even without this imagery, in this passage she is presented in the role of distraught mother rather than a goddess. In her search for Persephone, Ceres acts only as a mother, her grief has virtually stripped her divinity. Her characterisation and actions are paralleled in this episode by those of the other mother in this story Metanira, the mother of the dying child Triptolemus (named Demophoon in the *Homeric Hymn*). Taken almost directly from the *Homeric Hymn* (*HH*. 2. 225-260), this story shows that maternal instinct and nurture can be and are perceived as irrationality by the gods. This is represented by Ovid as the foolish piety of motherhood: *stulte pia mater* (*Fast*. 4. 555).

Ceres in her observations of Metanira suggests that mothers are foolish when they allow love and emotions to overrule rationality when it comes to the safety of their children. As nursemaid to the infant Triptolemus, Ceres is able to cure him of his illness (*Fast*. 4. 539-541). She then decided to bestow upon him the greatest gift, perhaps, that an immortal could imagine for a human, the gift of immortality. But in order to do this she must place his body into the glowing ashes of the fire, a thing that shocks and mortifies Metanira who seeing the ritual, snatches her son from Ceres (*Fast*. 4. 556-558). As a goddess, not a mother, Ceres rebukes Metanira, *inrita materno sunt mea dona metu* 'your maternal fear has ruined my gift' (*Fast*. 4. 558). It is the 'irrational' maternal fear of Metanira that has caused Triptolemus to be deprived of this gift of immortality. Ceres can see no reason other than maternal fear why Metanira would not wish her son to be not only

placed into a live fire, nor to be made immortal. She is blinded by her position as a god and is incapable of perceiving the reasoning behind Metanira's fear. For a mother to find her child being placed into a fire is, to mortals, a justifiable and legitimate reason for maternal distress. In this position, with someone else's child, Ceres acts not as mother but as goddess. She is not blinded by maternal fear.

When the role is reversed and when it is Ceres who is a powerless mother struggling to save her child, Ceres herself acts as a concerned mother, not a goddess. Ceres finds herself in the position of Metanira when she comes up against the divine strength of Jupiter. Where previously it had been Ceres rebuking the maternal fear of Metanira, here it is Jupiter rebuking the same perceived fault in Ceres. As a mother, Ceres challenges Jupiter about the union between Persephone and Dis. She is fearful that her young daughter has been abducted and forced to live in the underworld (*Fast*. 4. 585-620). Persephone has been raped and abducted by her uncle and forced to live in the realm of the dead. Her mother is justifiably afraid. Jupiter does not feel this fear. He views the situation as a god, not a father, certainly not through the eyes of a mother. In these circumstances Jupiter is rational. He sees the situation, in the same way that Ceres viewed the giving of immortality to Triptolemus. Jupiter asserts that this union is positive. He argues Dis is not a son-in-law to be ashamed of, for Dis holds power equal to Jupiter himself (*Fast*. 4. 599-603). What Jupiter sees are the benefits, the logical and rational benefits of the situation and he sees this through the eyes of an emotionless god. In this situation it is the mother, it is Ceres who exhibits the very thing for which she rebuked Metanira: maternal fear. Ceres in her state of fear has been stripped of all power. She is as powerless to quell her fear as is the suffering mother cow.

Fasti's Ceres is a complex character, not the least because she is a character built up from a wide variety of sources, including the parallel Ovidian episode. To a great extent what she is not is almost as important as what she is. She is not cruel and unforgiving like the Ceres from *Metamorphoses*. She does not want to inflict pain or suffering onto mankind or the natural world as a punishment to reflect her grief. She is not spiteful or petty. This much we can elicit from a direct comparison with her *Metamorphoses* alter ego. She is not an angry, vengeful mother of a sacrificed child like Clytemnestra. Nor is she like Procne, a wife who was capable of murdering her own child in order to punish her husband. These are all direct or indirect comparisons that can be drawn upon using this text and its intertextual allusions. We the readers are asked to make these links and comparisons and to see where Ceres sits within these descriptions and behaviours. This helps us to determine what she is not. They also help us to discover what she is.

Ceres is a mother who loves her daughter. She also loves and respects the earth and its plants and inhabitants. She is a woman who is touched by being addressed as a mother. Ceres wants to help and nurture the dying child and wishes to give him the gift of immortality. Her divinity causes her to lose sight of the maternal instincts and behaviours of other mothers, yet her own maternal instincts are very powerful. This Ceres closely resembles the Ceres from the *Homeric Hymn* she is as a maternal, compassionate, nurturing mother goddess. To reinforce these images Ovid has presented us with an intertextual connection that links imagery of the goddess searching for her child with that surrounding the mother cow who has lost her calf. If we are to gain a close comparison between any of the mothers that are we presented with it would appear that it is the mother cow and her behaviour that most closely represent the character of the grieving Ceres.

In many respects one can empathise with this comparison and can see a legitimate purpose behind such an allusion. On the other hand, the question needs to be asked as to whether or not this linkage serves to take away credibility from the Persephone Ceres story. Is the grief and suffering of Ceres being diminished or discredited by this comparison? The lost Persephone as a calf and Ceres her grieving mother as a cow is an unusual description, one that could be viewed as odd, almost farcical. These divinities are being de-deified, even de-humanised. They are being described in terms that relate to cattle. What could be the point of this? Perhaps like the *Fasti* version of Venus Ovid wanted his readers to see multiple versions or elements of the one character. It could be that the representation of Ceres as distraught mother is presented to us as being a ridiculous notion. Certainly mother cows are distraught when they lose their calves. But for a divinity to be represented as a grieving mother cow is an irregular depiction. Goddesses and even mortal mothers wreak havoc and exact revenge and retribution when they lose their daughters (or sisters). Perhaps, in light of our prior knowledge, we are not supposed to believe or accept or take seriously this new, maternal image of Ceres. Perhaps in the same way that the new, improved Venus is challenged, so too may be the case for Ceres. Or perhaps Ceres' representation as the mourning mother cow reflects ultimate loss of control and power. Ceres the goddess is as powerless to save her child as is the mother cow.

The mothers of *Fasti* 4 mirror images representing the fruitful, nurturing women from the *Ara Pacis Augustae*: Roma, Tellus, Venus, the images of strong, fertile mother goddesses. Perhaps here Ovid is giving his readers another side to this propaganda? While representing them in the Augustan way, as *genetrix*, Ovid is able to use allusion from other texts, to paint a picture of

confusion. Which is the intended representation? The details that are omitted in *Fasti* are conjured in the reader's minds. So too the intertextuality between his work and that of Lucretius, adds an unusual, bestial, element to the otherwise sympathetic story of the lost Persephone. Mother goddess Ceres is stripped of her power by the might of the masculine. The story of Persephone plays a pivotal role in the representation of motherhood in *Fasti* 4. It is true that this story differs markedly from the *Metamorphoses* version, but it is these differences that make the story interesting, it is these differences that provoke the reader to ask questions, and to try to correlate what they already know of these characters and their behaviour, with what they are now being told. The inclusion of the Persephone story and the search by Ceres offers the reader several examples of stories that revolve around motherhood and maternity. Ovid is, in *Fasti* 4, challenging the false representations that Augustus has given the Roman mother goddesses, especially Venus. He is showing his readers that while she is able to be painted in the proper Roman light, mythology cannot be forgotten. By subtle allusion, intertextuality and careful omission, Ovid is able to weave into his work a critique on the Augustan obsession with the representation of the fertile mother goddesses of Rome and of the Julian family.

Chapter Three
The Untouchable Goddess: Lotis, Priapus and the Violations of Vesta

Priapus, an ancient god of fertility whose comically crude appearance often led to farcical and crass representations, attempts rape twice within Ovid's *Fasti*. In ancient times statues of Priapus, the son of the god of wine and the goddess of love,[109] were recognisable by a characteristic red face and over-sized phallus.[110] These statues were used as scarecrows in many gardens.[111] Priapus had strong links to uncultured, raw sexuality. He is the traditionally unattractive, sexually undesirable character from ancient comedy or satyr plays who is unable to achieve his desired conquest.[112] That Priapus attempts rape is in itself not strange or unusual. What is unusual about these rapes has little to do with the attempted rapist but rather much more to do with the potential victims and the fact that these rape attempts mirror each other. These stories are not repetitions of each other, they are close copies, but with notable and deliberate differences.

[109] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 189.
[110] Clarke, J. R. *Looking at Love Making: Constructions of Sexuality in Roman Art*, (1998), pp. 13, 46, 48, 52, 174-177, 187, 193, 199-201.
[111] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), 'Priapus, son of Dionysus and Aphrodite, was chiefly the object of private worship…He was affectionately reproduced as a scarecrow in cottage gardens' p. 189.
Pike, R. *Love in Ancient Rome*, (1965), pp. 182-195. He was, however, by Roman times less a god of fertility and sexuality and more commonly perceived as a god of gardens, often used as a scarecrow.
Radice, B. *Who's Who in the Ancient World*, (1971), p. 121. 'A fertility god…[who] never seems to have been taken very seriously…treated with affectionate disrespect…with a red-painted face and a phallus…donkeys were his sacrificial animal, as being an embodiment of lust'.
[112] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 187.

In keeping with the usual depictions of the sexually embarrassing Priapus, [113] these attempted rapes are comical with a touch of the absurd and the ridiculous. Fantham in an early piece on *Fasti* discussed in detail the comic elements of these rape attempts.[114] Fantham suggested that these failed rapes are comical, even farcical.[115] She proposed the motivation for their inclusion may have been that they provided a change of tone, comic relief within the serious poetics of *Fasti*.[116] These episodes are intriguing and it is with much curiosity and hesitation that one accepts their inclusion within this work. They contain elements of the comic and it is easy to understand the interpretation of these episodes as being comedy of sorts. Yet the notion that Ovid was providing his readers with some light relief seems rather farfetched and fanciful. What would the purpose of such cleverly crafted and poignant passages be, if they needed to be filled and cushioned with some comic relief for the reader? The messages of *Fasti* are politically and socially driven and directed. Metaphors of rape and power persist throughout this witty and thought-provoking work. Ovid was challenging his readers to understand, to be as creative and ingenious as he. Rape is an integral aspect of the entire work. Any episode of sexual violence, or attempted violence in *Fasti* is worthy of thorough investigation.

Two failed rape attempts by Priapus occur within *Fasti*. Fantham acknowledged the 'problem'[117] that exists due to the apparent repetition of the one myth told twice. She noted that 'it is a well-known problem of the *Fasti* that Priapus' disappointment is twice told, with only a change of

[113] The *Priapeia* was a collection of poems in honour of the god Priapus. This was a collection of Latin and Greek poetry including some 80 pieces said to have been composed under Augustus including contribution from Ovid (and possibly by Virgil) These poems are humorous, witty and filled with sexual obscenity.
[114] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 187.
[115] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 185.
[116] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 187. 'A motive would be the desire for a change of tone, for sheer comic relief'.
[117] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 201.

victim'.[118] This statement is a considerable over-simplification. True Priapus' sexual lust is twice thwarted in an apparently similar setting. But to state that the victim is the only change in plot is wrong and extensively diminishes and belittles the significance of these two stories. These two episodes play a significant role in the politics of the *Fasti*.

Priapus' first appearance in *Fasti* occurs in Book 1 with the attempted rape of a nymph, Lotis (*Fast*. 1. 393-438). Readers of Ovid have come across Priapus' rape attempt of Lotis before, but could quite readily be excused for having missed it. In *Metamorphoses* Ovid devotes four lines to the attempted rape (*Met*. 9. 345-348). In this version Lotis is sexually pursued by the would-be ravisher Priapus. Rather than allow herself to be subjected to this rape, she is metamorphosed into a lotus flower (hence, one might assume, her name).[119] This story is not of central importance and, as is common in *Metamorphoses*, is told within a longer, detailed tale of transformation. It is but a passing reference. Passing reference that it may be, this four line myth appears to have formed the basis for the *Fasti* version. In the *Fasti* rape attempt Ovid uses much more detail and description. The first clear difference is that the *Fasti* passage is considerably longer at 48 lines (*Fast*. 1. 393-440). This tale is also altered unrecognisably, for both the setting and the ending are changed. Rather than be metamorphosed to escape this would-be rapist, *Fasti's* Lotis escapes unharmed and unchanged while the god is publicly humiliated (*Fast*. 1. 433-440).

[118] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 201.
[119] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 202.

Investigating this story, for a moment in isolation, we are presented with a tale of failed sexual violence. Is it comical? I would argue that it is not. The story ends with the embarrassment of the fleeing, naked and aroused Priapus and this ludicrous image, we are told, was laughed at by all:

> at deus obscena nimium quoque parte partus
> omnibus ad lunae lumina risus erat. (*Fast*. 1. 437-438)
> 'But the god whose obscene part was much too ready was, in the moonlight laughed at by all'.

Should we then, as an audience to Priapus' embarrassment, laugh also? Perhaps we should. Indeed the image is undeniably amusing. Yet can the seriousness of the attempted crime be so easily masked by two lines of humour? Is this story only found to be amusing because the rape, this time, was unsuccessful? Most intended rape victims in *Fasti* are certainly not as lucky as Lotis. Indeed we have her previous life as a nymph in *Metamorphoses* to use as an indicator of the result of this attempted rape. In *Metamorphoses*, the fleeing, panic-stricken Lotis was turned into a tree, dehumanised and trapped as an inanimate object. *Fasti's* Lotis escapes. She is not raped, nor is she metamorphosed. But the reality of the attempted crime should remain, especially in the context of a work where rape is often tantamount to a death sentence. The audience to the attempted crime laughs; they laugh at the comical figure of the scarecrow god Priapus. They would not have been laughing had he succeeded as he so nearly did. The lead-up to this rape attempt is, in actuality, filled with nervous anticipation. Priapus, we are told, lusts after Lotis: *hanc cupit, hanc optat, sola suspirat in illa* 'for her he desires, for her he prays, for her alone he sighs' (*Fast*. 1. 417). Priapus sneaks up silently on Lotis (*Fast*. 1. 426-427) and his rape would have been successful had the donkey not brayed (*Fast*. 1. 435-436). The attempted rape itself is not comical. Rather it is the figure of the naked, aroused and embarrassed Priapus fleeing in the moonlight that engenders amusement.

Let us not leave the Lotis myth in isolation. *Fasti* requires that it be read alongside its bookend, the attempted rape of Vesta. Each of the six books that comprise *Fasti* has a central character or theme around which the other content of the book is focused. In the case of Book 6 this character is the goddess Vesta and it is this goddess who is the target of Priapus' second rape attempt.[120] This attempt, aimed at a respected, virgin divinity with strong connections to Augustus abruptly changes the tone of this story. Barchiesi declares, 'incredible as it may seem'[121] Ovid has narrated an unprecedented attempted rape on the goddess Vesta. A rape attempt that was light hearted and supposedly comic in version one, becomes serious and carries with it political and religious undertones in version two. A reader is thus left to wonder exactly what the point of this distorted repetition could be.

The very fact that a repetition occurs at all is significant. The Ovidian corpus contains few repetitions, and when they do occur, often in the form of rape myths, it appears that this technique is rarely without a function, a literary purpose. While the repetition is unusual and noteworthy, it is the differences presented within the repeated stories that are of great consequence in this poem. It appears almost as though the stories are copies of each other but with clear and defined, intentional mistakes. The most significant of these mistakes or changes is the intended rape victim. The first, Lotis, is a would-be rape victim that readers of *Metamorphoses* may have been familiar with. The god and nymph rape montage that occurs early within this work certainly echoes this attempt. The second, however, the attempted rape of Vesta, virgin goddess (*Fast*. 6. 289-290) with close ties to the emperor and his family, is something

[120] This is the second rape in terms of the reading order of *Fasti*.
[121] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 137.

different altogether. The tempo of this story has increased markedly for here Ovid has consciously and deliberately politicised his own story.

Vesta, a historically Trojan goddess embodied and symbolised, as Fantham suggests, a number of things of vital significance to Augustus: Trojan ancestry, his avenging of the murder of Julius Caesar, the strength of his house and the piety and chastity of his family.[122] Vesta was a goddess whose cult was attended to by Augustus upon becoming Pontifex Maximus (Dio Cassius 54. 27.3, *Fast*. 3. 415-28).[123] The Vesta of the *Fasti* episode, it is very apparent, is not represented in this traditionally pious or chaste manner. To begin with, Vesta, whom the poet tells a mere 30 lines previously has no image or effigy only an eternal fire (*Fast*. 6. 295-299), is given human form:

> Vesta iacet placidamque capit secura quietem,
> sicut erat, positum caespite fulta caput. (*Fast*. 6. 331-332)
> Vesta lay, carefree, and took a quiet rest, just as she was, her head resting on the grass.

We are told that Vesta is at a party of the gods, held by Cybele (*Fast*. 6. 321) celebrating and drinking in this opulent, decadent and vice-fuelled party. The poet avoids depicting the events of the party by stating that it would be unlawful (and boring) to do so, but he tells that that there was much drinking and merriness (*Fast*. 6. 325-326). This portrayal of a drunk Vesta with human form has, whether intentionally or not, dragged this work into the political arena. Yet it has been argued, that far from making any great political commentary that Ovid was merely filling the spaces in a book featuring Vesta, with an inadequate recreation of a Greek myth.[124] This is not, I

[122] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 208.
[123] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 130.
[124] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 210.

believe, the case. However, before dismissing the argument outright, the case put forward warrants inquiry.

The main argument put forward in negative criticism of these two Priapus rape attempts, these two apparent repetitions, is that it is felt that in a final drafting of this work one of the stories should have, and indeed was intended to be, rejected.[125] That is to say that it is believed by most that the two Priapus episodes were never intended to be both included within the same work. This idea suggests that one version was a better and later written and edited version of the other. But then which one is which? Most critics of this repetition have suggested that the version of the rape attempt that should have been rejected is the Vesta myth,[126] with Fantham going so far as to call it a 'failure'.[127] I do not agree with this comment on two counts. First, I believe that the Vesta myth, as a part of a pair, plays a strong and coherent role in the thematic development and construction of the *Fasti*. Secondly, I would argue that it is certainly not a failure. It is indeed a cleverly composed piece of intertextual wordplay. Newlands views the two works in a different light to Fantham. She sees these two stories as mirrors, bookends that frame the entire poem.[128] She argues that the elements of repetition within these two myths serve as proof to suggest that neither should be rejected, rather that both work together, the parallel image in Book 6 designed

[125] Newlands, C. E. *Playing with time*, (1995), p. 128. 'Most critics have felt that in a final redaction of the *Fasti*, Ovid would have excised one of these stories'. Newlands asserts that; 'critics have generally followed the view of Hermann Peter, ed. *P. Ovidii Nasonis Fastorum Libri Sex* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1907) on 6. 319, that in a final redaction Ovid would have excised the derivative Vesta episode'.
[126] Murgatroyd, P. 'The Rape Attempts on Lotis and Vesta', (2002), p. 622. 'Most have written off the passage on Vesta…'
[127] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 210. 'The tale, like Priapus himself, was a failure, defeated by Vesta's aura of respectability'.
[128] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 129.

to signify closure.[129] This idea highlights Newlands' view in favour of the *Fasti* as designed and complete in six books. It also places the attempted rape of Vesta in an important context.

Fantham, holding the stance of the Vesta myth as a failure, argues that this myth was Ovid's first version of the story.[130] She asserted a belief that the religious and political status of Vesta in Ovid's contemporary culture restricted his ability to write freely and without restraint. This argument suggests that Ovid's choice of character and subject matter was overly ambitious and that he could not exercise the creative freedom that he desired on a topic so tightly constrained by Roman politics. Newlands, too, suggested that the 'new identity' given to Vesta by Augustus was 'hard to accommodate to the wit and play of Ovid's Roman poem and its persistent affinities with amatory verse'.[131] This constraint, Fantham argues, was greatly lessened by the freedom derived from the use of an apolitical Greek mythological version.[132] Evidence exists to demonstrate that the Lotis version was composed or strongly reworked in exile during a time, Fantham argues, when Ovid's creativity and poetic mastery were rejuvenated.[133] Did Ovid ignore and try to adapt the Greek version of the myth because it had no relevance to a Roman calendar?[134] This sounds like a possible, even plausible suggestion. Rome had for centuries adopted and appropriated mythology and history from other cultures and had fitted, at times forced them to fit, a Roman context.

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[129] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 129.
[130] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 215.
Murgatroyd, P. 'The Rape Attempts on Lotis and Vesta', (2002), p. 623. Murgatroyd also acknowledges this view asserting a view held by many that this version is 'an inferior earlier version of the same basic tale'.
[131] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 131.
[132] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 210.
[133] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 215. 'The high quality of…Priapus' attempt on Lotis serves as confirmation of Ovid's continued- or rather renewed- creative power in his poetry of exile'.
[134] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 215.

Fasti is a poem the declared intent of which, Ovid stated, was to tell of the history, legend and astronomy that made up the Roman calendar (*Fast*. 1. 1-2). In spite of this asserted aim, however, this is a work teeming with Greek allusions and references, both subtle and overt. Priapus himself was originally a Hellespontine god (*Fast*. 6. 341), later Greek then Italian.[135] There are a number of characters from Greek mythology that appear within this poem: Persephone and Ceres/Demeter (*Fast*. 4.417ff), Callisto (*Fast*. 2.153ff), Hercules/Heracles and Omphale (*Fast*. 2.331ff) are all included within this 'Roman' work.[136] Despite the author's declared intention, *Fasti* is not limited to narrating events and stories of entirely Roman origin, nor do modern scholars accept the poet's stated aims. The argument that Ovid created a Romanised version of a Greek myth under obligation to stay true to his Roman topic is not convincing. The *Fasti* itself shows that despite the apparent rigidity of the constraints of a calendar the poet has in actuality had a great deal of choice and control over what is included in his calendar and when it is included. The characters of other stories of Greek origin are not altered to fit the mould of a 'Roman' calendar. There is, therefore, no convincing evidence to support the notion that Ovid felt in any way compelled to do so in the case of Lotis and Vesta.

To add further doubt to the validity of this argument evidence exists to supports a case that the nymph Lotis was, in fact, an Ovidian creation.[137] Or to be precise, it is rather a lack of evidence that can be used to give weight to this argument. There is no record of any myth, Greek or Latin, involving any nymph named Lotis and thus no myth of her attempted rape by Priapus until

[135] Radice, B. *Who's Who in the Ancient World*, (1971), p. 121.
[136] One of the more perplexing questions about this work is indeed why Ovid has chosen to include so many Greek myths and legends in a work on the Roman calendar.
[137] Search of the TLG reveals that no character by the name of Lotis ever existed within Greek mythology.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. This would suggest that Lotis was a construction of Ovid, used in both *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses*. Rather than using existing Greek mythology and adapting it to fit a Roman environment, Ovid, a Latin author created the Greek nymph Lotis. She is a work of his imagination, she is a Latin creation. This evidence should be persuasive enough to dispel any notion that Ovid was compelled to adapt a Greek myth to create a Roman version. This simply cannot have been the case, because there existed no original Greek version for him to have used as a source of inspiration.[138]

Given this evidence, let us suppose that Ovid indeed felt no restriction or compulsion to Romanise this 'Greek' myth. If this is indeed the case, as it certainly appears, then how or why could it be useful to query which story was written first, for they are both in actuality original constructs of the poet. Lefèvre and Fantham[139] have both argued that evidence of Ovid's considerable reworking of the *Fasti* during his exile clearly demonstrates that the Lotis story was a later inclusion. Despite its position in Book 6, they suggest that the Vesta story was written first and was later reworked and rewritten as the Lotis story. It is thus argued that one of these stories, in their argument the Vesta story, was never intended to be included by Ovid in his finished poem for it was seen as the prototype, not the polished final edit.[140] Yet this argument appears flawed. The fact remains that despite the extensive reworking and re-writing of *Fasti* for which as Fantham and Lefèvre assert there is much evidence, neither episode was in fact discarded. While Newlands agrees that Book 1 shows the most extensive signs of revision, she also notes that the

[138] The only references available for this goddess are Ovid. *Met*. 9. 345-348. *Fast*. 1. 393-438.
[139]Lefèvre, E. 'Die Schlacht am Cremera in Ovid's *Fasten* 2. 195-242' *RhM* 123 (1980), pp. 152-62. As cited in Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), pp. 214-15.
[140] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), pp. 214-215.

period of time taken by Ovid to write and revise this work consisted of some fifteen years.[141] One would assume, then, that during this extensive period of writing and amendment, Ovid would have had more than ample opportunity to discard one or other of the stories if he had desired to do so. Yet, the text as it stands contains both. We can but read the text as it appears to us and in its extant version, the version that Ovid completed, both stories exist. Therefore, the text itself stands as an extremely persuasive assessment that both stories were intended by Ovid to be included within the poem. What we are left to ponder, then, is not whether or not Ovid chose to include these two remarkably similar, yet significantly different episodes within his poem, but why.

An answer to this question was offered by Fantham who had offered an alternative suggestion to her theory of sequence. This second theory is an assertion that by the time he had completed this work, by the time Ovid reached the point of writing Book 6, he was running out of desire, motivation and creativity. By this stage of writing the *Fasti*, Fantham asserted, Ovid's imagination and also his sources of creative material were 'drying up'.[142] Such an argument is thus demonstrably based around the reasonable notion that this poem was designed to be consist of only six books and that June was intended to be the last book of Ovid's calendar.[143] Feeney, on

[141] Newlands, C. E. *Playing with time*, (1995), p. 5. Newlands points out the length of time spent on this poem; begun in 2CE and worked on up until the poet's death in 17 CE. '…does not quite explain why Ovid worked on this poem for such a long time…'.
Feeney, D. C. '*si licet et fas est*: Ovid's *Fasti* and the problem of free speech under the principate', (1992), p. 15. Feeney also supports the notion of considerable re-working of this story during the poet's exile: 'important sections of the poem were re-written from exile…'
[142] Fantham, E. 'Sexual Comedy in Ovid's *Fasti*: Sources and Motivation', (1983), p. 215.
[143] Not all scholars share Fantham's view that Ovid was running out of imagination or inspiration. Feeney when discussing the six book structure of the poem asserts that 'Ovid's boredom' had nothing to do with the abrupt ending of the poem'. Feeney, D. C. '*si licet et fas est*: Ovid's *Fasti* and the problem of free speech under the principate', (1992), p. 15.

the other hand, asserted that 'Ovid's boredom' had nothing in the least to do with the abrupt ending of the poem.[144]

One would assume that Fantham's argument is intended to suggest that Ovid had, by the end of his poem, simply run out of things to write about. In other words, that upon reaching Book 6, a book designed to focus upon the goddess Vesta, that Ovid may have during a momentary lack of inspiration, plagiarised an earlier version of his own writing, changing the name of the intended victim along with a few other minor details. This is not, I believe, a satisfactory or convincing argument. The Vesta story is a brief tale consisting of only thirty lines (*Fast*. 6. 319-349). Ovid himself tells his readers that this is a *fabula parva*, a short tale (*Fast*. 6. 320). Why, then, would the poet have spent the time and effort required to rework an earlier myth for its inclusion in a very different context, for a story that is only thirty lines long? Book 6 consists of some 812 lines and if this story had been excised the book would nevertheless have been 782 lines long. At this length the book would still have been longer, in fact, than Book 1 that is complete at just 724 lines. The Vesta myth was clearly not added to pad or fill Book 6 with some new material.

It seems to be an exercise in futility to persist in debating which episode should have been or was intended to have been discarded by the author. Clearly neither episode was rejected. Rather than speculate about the worth or value of one or the other, it is eminently more useful to look at the text as it stands and assess the reasons behind the inclusion of both stories. For it is likely, extremely and persuasively likely, that Ovid deliberately intended both stories be included. Both

[144] Feeney, D. C. '*si licet et fas est*: Ovid's *Fasti* and the Problem of Free Speech under the Principate', (1992), p. 15.

versions of this myth were constructs of the poet. Both were included within the same work and both survived reworking and revising in exile. On the basis of this evidence, let us assume that Ovid deliberately included both episodes in his poem. This being the case, it is apparent that he would have expected comparison, discussion and perhaps controversy. As both stories were indeed constructs of the author, does it matter, in terms of an analysis of *Fasti* which story was written first? It seems that there can be no irrefutable proof for the order of writing, indeed it seems a matter that is not of any relevance to an understanding of either or both of these episodes. Perhaps then, rather than discussing which of the two stories was written first, or should have been discarded, a close appraisal of the episodes together and within the broader contexts of their books and the poem as a whole, will show that both were indeed intended to be included within this work.

Let us first address the Lotis myth for it is, sequentially at least, the first of the two episodes within this poem. It is also, perhaps, the least politically controversial of the two versions. When reading *Fasti*, indeed when reading any work of literature, the context of an episode is of vital significance to an interpretation of its meaning. Excerpts cannot be simply taken from within a work with no regard for their position or broader context. This passage is no exception. Before looking at the actual Lotis and Priapus episode itself, it will be useful to analyse the text that surrounds it. The text directly preceding this passage is a discussion on the different rites of animal sacrifice (*Fast*. 1. 317-392). This theme evolves into a contemplation and explanation of the different ways in which animals are punished. These animals are punished, we are told, because they have committed a crime or crimes against humans or divinities (*Fast*. 1. 349-92). The list describing the different animals and their punishments continues until Ovid reaches the

animal that he has, we find, been building up to. Here the last animal of the list is mentioned and we are told of the sacrifice of a donkey;

> caeditur et rigido custodi ruris asellus;
> causa pudenda quidem sed tamen apta deo. (*Fast.* 1. 391-2)
> 'A young donkey too is killed for the stiff guardian of the country; the reason is shameful but is fitting for that god'.

The culmination of these sacrifice stories, is the account of Priapus' rape attempt on Lotis. This, it is clear, is the purpose of the tales of animal sacrifice. The reason for the inclusion of this story is, apparently, to explain the sacrifice of the donkey to the god Priapus for it is Silenus' donkey that betrays the aroused Priapus (*Fast.* 1. 433-4) who is sexually thwarted and humiliated (*Fast.* 1. 437-8). As a punishment for his betrayal, the donkey is sacrificed (*Fast.* 1. 439-40). The narrative concerning the punishment of indiscreet animals is completed by the death of this donkey.

It is within this context that the story of Lotis as an intended rape victim is told. The focus of this story is not, we are led to believe, the act of attempted sexual violence, rather it is on the aetiological myth that explains the reason behind the sacrifice of the donkey to the rustic god Priapus. In ancient times donkeys were indeed connected with Priapus, not necessarily for being the instrument that thwarted his rape attempt, but because they were seen to be the embodiment of lust.[145] In this tale, however, it seems that it is the god Priapus and not the donkey that is represented as being consumed by lust. Indeed it is the donkey which brays and alerts the nymph to her potential attacker: *intempestivos edidit ore sonos* 'his mouth gave out an ill-timed sound' (*Fast.* 1.434). The donkey braying is an ill-timed sound for the rapist, but perhaps not such an ill-

[145] Radice, B. *Who's Who in the Ancient World*, (1971), p. 121. The donkey was seen to be the embodiment of both lust and stupidity in antiquity. Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, Translated by Hanson, A. J. (1989).

timed sound for Lotis. Priapus, angry in his humiliation and defeat causes the death of the donkey. This story, Ovid tells us, explains why donkeys are sacrificed to Priapus (*Fast*. 1. 440).

Is there, however, something more to this myth than the aetiology of an animal sacrifice? In what we may perceive to be the original version from *Metamorphoses* there is no sleeping nymph, no braying donkey and no animal sacrifice (*Met*. 9. 345-348). True, this version is but four lines long, but its plot is markedly different. In this version there is no donkey to issue an ill-timed bray and to alert the nymph who similarly is not raped, but who this time suffers a bodily metamorphosis. In the Vesta myth however, the donkey is again present. The donkey once more betrays the frustrated Priapus and Ovid has chosen markedly similar terms to describe this betrayal: *intempestivo cum rudit ille sono* 'when he made an ill-timed sound' (*Fast*. 6. 342). The donkeys from both *Fasti* myths utter an ill-timed sound and both pay the ultimate price for it, both donkeys are killed for giving this warning, for preventing and thwarting the rape. *Fasti* is a work which sees the rape of women intricately and undeniably linked with restriction and suppression of speech. This theme is highlighted by the rapes and the raped women of Book 2. What if these attempted rape episodes were also used to highlight the suppression of speech? This time it is not the suppression of the speech of the would-be victim, who escapes unharmed, but the suppression of speech of the subordinate, the inferior, the donkey who utters a warning and pays for it by being silenced indefinitely.

There is another story within the *Fasti* that sees one who speaks out to warn another of her planned rape being punished by being silenced permanently. This is the tale of Lara whose tongue is ripped out after she warns the nymph Juturna of Jupiter's intended rape (*Fast*. 2. 582-616). She loses the tongue that she had used incautiously: *quaque est non usa modeste* 'that

which she had used indiscreetly' (*Fast*. 2. 607). Lara is then sent to live in the underworld, the place of the dead tantamount to being killed herself, to give birth to her children who are themselves the product of her own rape. Her children, according to Ovid, became the Lares (*Fast*. 2. 615-616), who in classical times were associated with the Penates. The Lares were statues depicting two youths wearing floral wreaths and were often represented in the home with Vesta as an example of piety.[146] The Lares, positioned together with Vesta or a family *genius*, were used to signify a representation of 'sacrificial piety'.[147] Could the donkey from the Lotis and Vesta myths be another representation given to us by Ovid of one who is punished for speaking against authority? Both Lara and the two donkeys are silenced for making an ill-timed sound, for speaking out of turn and for preventing the sexual success of one in a position of power and authority. There is no record of the Lara myth existing before this time.[148] The previous Lotis myth had not included the braying of the donkey and there was, apparently, no previous extant myth connecting Vesta with Priapus.[149] If these stories are all constructs of the author, Ovid would have been under no compulsion to include speech as an issue. Whether or not the linkage between the Lares and Vesta suggested by Turcan[150] played any significant role in Roman households or in Augustan Roman society is unclear. However, in the context of this work the

[146] Turcan, R. *The Gods of Ancient Rome*, (2000), p. 16. 'In the classical era, the Lar was duplicated and the Lares became rather confused, or at least associated, with the Penates, who appear in the Lararia of Pompeii in the form of gods…As for the two Lares, they are shown as two young people, their heads crowned with flowers…They flank Vesta or the domestic genius or spirit, thus setting an example of sacrificial piety. They are also to be found in the company of Mercury, Venus…or other deities dear to the paterfamilias'.
[147] Turcan, R. *The Gods of Ancient Rome*, (2000), p. 16.
[148] There appear to have been no other myths that tie the goddess Tacita with the Lares, nor indeed any myths that discuss the rape of this goddess. Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 160. As Newlands asserts; 'Ovid seems to have invented the roman myth of Lara himself on the model of the myth of Procne, Philomela and Tereus, for Lara's rape is joined with the extraction of her tongue a horrific and rare combination that is found in the better known Greek myth'.
[149] Murgatroyd, P. 'The Rape Attempts on Lotis and Vesta', (2002), p. 623. As Murgatroyd states; 'there is no extant version of this tale of Vesta in any earlier or contemporary authors, so it seems that readers would not have been able to predict the course of events in it'.
[150] Turcan, R. *The Gods of Ancient Rome*, (2000), p. 16.

stories of Lara and the donkey, in both Priapus myths, play much the same role. That is the role of an innocent who speaks against a potential rapist and who is punished for this perceived crime. The model for the Lara rape story was that of Philomela and Tereus a story very familiar to a reader of *Metamorphoses*. The Lara story, in turn, evokes memories of this tale of brutality just as the tale of the silenced donkey evokes a memory of the mutilated and silenced Lara and in turn Philomela. Newlands, in discussing the Lara and Philomela rapes, comments that while the obvious similarity between these two women is the loss of their tongues, the poignant message is that these victims are deprived of speech which she justifiably equates to a loss of power.[151] The same can be said for the defeated donkey. Yet in the case of these rape attempts, the donkey manages to speak out in time.

Within these two attempted rape stories links can be made with the actual rapes episodes that mark the books of *Fasti,* prominently in Book 2. *Fasti* rapes more often than not follow a formula. There is, of course, always a potential rapist and there is an intended victim and there is an innocent (often but not always the intended rape victim) who is deprived of speech and power. This time, or rather both times, it is not the female who is silenced. It is not the female who is less powerful than the comical, crass and farcical phallic god Priapus. The only character in these two tales who is the subordinate or inferior to Priapus is the donkey and thus his speech and life are ultimately suppressed. These tales, or more accurately, the endings of these tales, are represented by Ovid as comical and light-hearted. However, the message becomes much more sinister when

[151] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 160. '…the absence of speech, which means the absence of power…'

linked with the other rapes, particularly with the mutilation and rape of Lara whose ill-timed words caused her to lose her voice and her life.

The Vesta episode begins with the Ovidian narrator's request to the goddess herself to grant the poet favour. There is nothing unusual about this, but, it is Ovid's next comment that highlights this link with the concepts of speech and silence from Book 2. There exist, within the *Fasti*, things that are permitted and lawful to speak of and those that are not. Ovid here asks;

> Vesta, fave! tibi nunc operata resolvimus ora,
> ad tua si nobis sacra venire licet. (*Fast*. 6.249-251)
> 'O Vesta, grant me your favour! In your service now open my lips, if it is lawful for me to come to your sacred rites'.

Here the poet is asking the goddess that he be allowed to come to Vesta's sacred rites. One could perhaps be forgiven for looking closely at four words; *operata* / *ora* / *si* / *licet*. These are words which could be read as the author asking if it is permitted for him to open his mouth and speak about the goddess Vesta. From the very beginning of *Fasti* Ovid sets the bar for discussion on matters that are right and lawful: *si licet et fas est* 'if it is lawful and permitted' (*Fast*. 1.25).[152] These words are echoed by the scene of Vesta's attempted rape, where the poet tells us he is not allowed *nec licet* to talk about the festivities of the gods (*Fast*. 6. 325). These words, from Book 1 and particularly with the words from Book 6 become extremely pertinent for the donkey who speaks at a time which is not lawful or permitted and pays he for it with his life; twice over in this poem both in the first and the last books.

[152] Feeney, D. C. '*si licet et fas est*: Ovid's *Fasti* and the Problem of Free Speech under the Principate', (1992).

One of the crucial and critical differences between these two episodes is manifestly the intended rape victim. This much is obvious if by nothing other than name alone. It is this difference, this name swap that is responsible for altering the tone so radically. Let us look at both of these rape attempts. Who is Lotis and why is she desired by Priapus? She is a party guest in Greece at what Ovid tells us is the festival of Bacchus (*Fast*. 1. 393-94). Pans, satyrs and nymphs are attending this party, along with Silenus and, of course, Priapus (*Fast*. 1. 395-440). There are Naiads with their hair unbound and their skirts above their knees, with ripped tops revealing their breasts and without shoes (*Fast*. 1.405-410). The scene is well and truly set for this party given the descriptions from Ovid to the reader. This is an erotic, lust-filled setting fuelled not only by the sexy attendees (*Fast*. 1. 405-410), but also by generous helpings of wine (*Fast*. 1. 403). Amid this setting, indeed perhaps because of it, Ovid tells us, that Priapus has, unsurprisingly, lost his heart to Lotis:

> at ruber, hortorum decus et tutela, Priapus
> omnibus ex illis Lotide captus erat. (*Fast*. 1. 415-16)
> 'But red Priapus, glory and guard of gardens, was captured by Lotis, from amongst all of the others'.

In terms highly reminiscent of elegy's *servitium amoris*, Priapus is captured by Lotis. He tries to attract her attention but she, a beautiful nymph, scorns his advances until finally, exhausted, Lotis lies down to sleep (*Fast*. 1. 423-25). Priapus creeps towards the sleeping nymph and slowly moves back her covers only to be disturbed by the braying of the donkey. The whole grove is awoken and Priapus in his lusty state is humiliated (*Fast*. 1. 436-439). In summary, this is a party held by nymphs, satyrs and pans. Priapus falls for the charms of Lotis and attempts to catch her interest but is rejected. He, therefore, tries the more stealthy approach while she is asleep.

If we are to accept, as Richlin suggests, that the 'almost identical'[153] Lotis and Vesta stories are the same in every aspect except name, then a reader would expect that the episodes would, of course, be the same except for this change of name.[154] They are not. Richlin herself had compiled a table to highlight the similarities between these two rapes and this table, while dutifully presenting the similarities, stands also to highlight the differences.[155] The most noteworthy of these differences, as highlighted by Richlin, are the names of the characters. Lotis is a character created by Ovid, while Vesta has Trojan origins and is one of the goddesses closely and deliberately associated with Augustus. This difference is profound and while not overlooked, it is generally under-rated. There are, however, a number of other differences that not only change the tone of the story but also change the behaviour and motivation of the characters. The setting is different (*Fast*. 1. 393-4, *Fast*. 6. 321-322), the other attendees at the party are different (*Fast*. 1.395-400, *Fast*. 6. 322-324) and even the conclusion of the episode is different (*Fast*. 1. 430-440, *Fast*. 6. 335-348)

So who then, in the context of this episode, is Vesta? She is a guest at a party held by Cybele to which all the other gods were invited, so too the satyrs and nymphs (*Fast*. 6.321-324). Silenus, an attendee at the Lotis party (*Fast*. 1. 399) was not invited to the other (*Fast* . 6. 324). As we have seen, the poet instructs his readers that it is unlawful to speak of the activities of the gods. He does, however, manage to mention the fact that the night was passed with much drinking (*Fast*. 6. 326). There is, in the Vesta version, no description like that which we see in the Lotis episode, of

[153] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992), p. 170.
[154] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992), p. 170. The two rapes, Richlin argues are 'the same in all but name'.
[155] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992), p. 170.

scantily clad nymphs parading around the party.[156] The gods and goddesses at this party grew weary, or drunk and lay about on the grass with Vesta herself choosing to lie upon the ground and rest (*Fast*. 6. 327-332). Meanwhile throughout the party Priapus has been wandering around trying, with no avail, his chances with nymphs and goddesses. Finally he sees the sleeping Vesta (*Fast*. 6. 335). The poet tells us that it is doubtful that he knew her to be Vesta but that he mistook her for a nymph. Ovid indeed paraphrases Priapus who, we are told, had said he was unaware of her identity (*Fast*. 6. 333-336). He approaches the sleeping goddess, the donkey brays and Priapus escapes without humiliation or retribution (*Fast*. 6. 336-348). This is a party held by and for the divine royalty, the *aeternos deos* (*Fast*. 6. 322) and with Satyrs and nymphs as extra guests. Vesta and the other guests are drunk (*Fast*. 6. 326-332) and lie about on the ground. Priapus seems eager to try his chances with any nymph he can and, we are told has no idea who Vesta is. He is then thwarted by the braying donkey but this time he manages to escape without humiliation. In this case it is Vesta herself who is humiliated.

The setting of the party is different. The guests are different. The potential rape victim is different. Notably, though, it is the intention of Priapus which is markedly different. In Book 1, Priapus appears to fall, if not in love, then in deep lust with Lotis. She captures him as a lover is captured by his beloved. He desires her but is rejected at every turn and so he plans his attack. In Book 6, however, Priapus appears as a drunken lecher who is trying his luck with all of the nymphs at the party. He is, as Newlands succinctly puts it: 'randomly on the make'.[157] He does not choose Vesta for any compelling reason of lust or love, rather he stumbles upon her and

[156] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 135. 'Vesta is not presented as seductively beautiful and there are no details about the other nymphs' sensuality of the kind that we find in the Priapus and Lotis myth…'
[157] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 135.

opportunity knocks. Is Vesta being represented as the chaste virginal Augustan goddess or is she being represented as a sexually desirable nymph? It appears that her characterisation falls somewhere in between. She is represented as drunk or drinking at a party with satyrs and nymphs, lying on the grass, perhaps in a drunken stupor. Yet, she is not an overtly beautiful or eroticised nymph who attracts attention and desire. She is caught in between.[158]

It is clear from an analysis of these two episodes, that they are not the same in all but name. They are, in fact, very different, while being sufficiently similar to cause speculation and confusion. A reader of Book 6 will make a link back to the eroticised tale from Book 1 and will wonder at its double inclusion within this poem. The episode in Book 1 works to highlight the Book 6 story in the reader's mind. This is a technique that Ovid has used before with rape stories from within *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*.[159] Ovid takes one story and includes it twice either within two poems or within the one work, as is the case here, to highlight this story for a particular reason. What is the reason in this case? The Vesta story comes with the context of its position in Book 6, a book concerned with Vesta, a goddess with strong ties to Augustus. It also comes in the last book of this poem. The Vesta episode needs to be addressed in its own context and not only as a comparison with the Lotis episode.

A question that needs to be answered in relation to this episode is why Ovid chose to devote the attentions of a book of his *Fasti* to the goddess Vesta. What role did Vesta play in Rome that would make her character appealing to use as the main focal point for what would be,

[158] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 136. 'Vesta is tarnished by the company she keeps, yet she does not shine in a typically erotic, elegiac role'.
[159] The Callisto and Persephone myths each occur in both poem and their inclusions in both texts serve to highlight their significance.

intentionally or not, the last book of *Fasti*? Vesta was originally a Trojan goddess brought to Italy by Aeneas after the Trojan War (*Fast*. 1. 528-542).[160] According to myth, Aeneas brought with him the goddess and her flame and this flame was to be maintained and never allowed to be extinguished. According to Plutarch this flame was seen to represent the eternal power that controlled society and it was by order of Numa that the flame always be kept alight. Plutarch writes that Numa saw the maintenance of the flame as being necessary in maintaining the order of the universe: 'Numa… is said to have hallowed and ordered [the flame] to be kept sleepless, that it might image forth the ever-living force which orders the universe aright' (*Cam*. 20.5). By Augustan times her role as a mythological figure of state was strong. Vesta's Trojan ancestry made her a very desirable asset to the emperor who was celebrating Rome's divine and pious ancestry through art and monuments on a grand scale.[161] Barchiesi suggests that the significant role that both Mars and Vesta play within this work is due to their role within the 'Augustan' Roman pantheon (perhaps Venus could be added to this list?). [162] The temple of Vesta had been

[160] A passage in *Aeneid* 2 sees Aeneas dreaming of Hector:

> 'defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent.
> sacra suosque tibi commendat Troia penatis;
> hos cape fatorum comites, his moenia quare
> magna, pererrato statues quae denique ponto'.
> sic ait et manibus vittas Vestamque potentem
> aeternumque adytis effert penetralibus ignem.
> ' "If any right hand could have saved Troy, mine would have saved it. Into your care she now commands her sacraments and her household gods. Take them to share your fate. Look for a great city to establish for them to after long wanderings across the sea'. These were his words and he brought out in his own hands from her inmost shrine the mighty goddess Vesta with the sacred ribbons on her head and her undying flame' ". (*Aen*. 2.292- 297)

[161] Ramage, A. & Ramage, N. H. *Roman Art*, (1995), p. 90. Within the temple of Mars Ultor inside each *exedra* was a statue of either Aeneas or Romulus. Ramage and Ramage assert that this building program highlighting Rome's mythical founders was similar to the literature of the time, such as the *Aeneid*: 'this sculptural program was the visual counterpart to the literary statements regarding the divine and mythical ancestry made by the great Roman poet Virgil in his epic, *The Aeneid* that had been written only a few years earlier'.
D'Ambra, E. *Art and Identity in the Roman World*, (1998), p. 33. There is a panel on the *Ara Pacis Augustae* that depicts Romulus, Remus, Mars and Aeneas.

[162]Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), pp. 203-4. 'Their important role in the poem is proportionate to the weight they carry in the Augustan rewriting of the Roman pantheon'.

relocated during Augustus' rebuilding program to sit on the Palatine attached to the house of Augustus himself.[163] Augustus had literally and figuratively linked himself with this goddess who was the embodiment of chastity while also serving as a permanent reminder of Rome's Trojan and divine ancestry.

Augustus had heightened the significance of the role of Vesta in Rome during his principate as he had done with those gods significant in the founding of Rome: Mars and Venus. It was fitting, then, that these gods who received much attention in Roman religion be chosen by Ovid to be included at length in his calendar of Augustan Rome. It is also the case that when discussing any one of the gods or goddesses closely linked with the emperor that the lines between poetic narration and political commentary become blurred. Things become even more difficult in the case of Vesta the goddess whose form is ambiguous. Ovid in *Fasti* gives a number of varied representations of this goddess ranging from her existing as flame alone unable to conceive (*Fast*. 6. 291) to her having a tangible body that arouses the would-be rapist Priapus (*Fast*. 6. 319-349). This ambiguity serves to present a confusing and contradictory picture of the goddess. Barchiesi on Vesta's representation in *Fasti* describes her as being presented in an incompatible, almost contradictory way: '[Vesta is] torn between incompatible representations, elusive and imageless…'[164] In order to understand the Vesta and Priapus story, which Murgatroyd has astutely suggested is 'deliberately provocative'[165] it is necessary to ascertain the position that the goddess is given within Book 6 and indeed within the work as a whole. The passage is indeed provocative, but so too are a number of other representations of Vesta from within this book.

[163] (*Fast.* 4. 949ff). Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), pp. 204-5.
[164] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 137.
[165] Murgatroyd, P. 'The Rape Attempts on Lotis and Vesta', (2002), p. 623.

In *Aeneid* 2 (*Aen*. 2. 296ff). Virgil narrates a dream that Aeneas has in which the ghost of Hector comes to him and instructs him of his duty to escape from Troy. In this dream Hector goes inside the temple and with his own hands he carries outside the goddess Vesta and her flame (the flame which is, in this version, a separate entity):

> sic ait et manibus uittas Vestamque potente
> aeternumque adytis effert penetralibus ignem. (*Aen*. 2. 297-7)
> 'This he said and brought out in his own hands from the inner most shrine the mighty goddess Vesta with the ribbons on her head and her eternal flame'.

Hector, being already dead and a figment of Aeneas' unconscious state, was spared any punishment for touching the virgin goddess. So too, apparently, was Aeneas spared for he carried her safely to Rome. Such was not the case for Metellus who was Pontifex Maximus in Rome during one of the years that the temple of Vesta, the goddess of the flame, ironically, caught on fire.[166] Metellus, according to a number of ancient historians was permanently blinded as a result of this act of heroism.[167] This blinding is not recorded by Ovid, who describes no punishment and who notes that the goddess approved of the act.

> dixit et irrupit. factum dea rapta probavit
> pontificisque sui munere tuta fuit. (*Fast*. 6. 453-4)
> 'With these words he burst in and the goddess approved of the removal (rape?) and she was saved by the devotion of her priest'.

However, the word that Ovid has chosen to use to describe Vesta's removal by Metellus is one that in *Fasti*, as elsewhere within the Ovidian corpus and in Roman law and culture was synonymous to rape, *rapta* (*Fast*. 6. 453). The reader is not told the means by which the goddess showed her approval and Vesta is, in this passage, another voiceless rape victim of *Fasti* whose

[166] 241 BCE
[167] Livy (*Epit*. 19); Dion. (*Hal*. 2. 66. 4); Val. (*Max* 1.4.5); Pliny (*HN*. 7. 141); Orosius (4. 119).

behaviour or approval is assumed and taken rather than openly given. In this representation Metellus acts similarly to Brutus who, for the apparent greater good of the Roman people, snatches (*rapit Fast*. 2. 838) the knife out of the body of the dying Lucretia whose lifeless eyes and hair appeared to approve of the act (*Fast*. 2. 845-846). In Book 6 Ovid has thus presented his readers with the attempted rape and the symbolic rape of Vesta. His word choice when describing her removal by Metellus suggests that even while the act may appear pious and may be religiously justified it is still the 'rape' of a virgin goddess.

The rape and attempted rape of Vesta within Book 6 are pointing the reader of *Fasti* very boldly in the direction of the Palatine Hill. When Augustus took on the role of Pontifex Maximus in 12 BCE he also moved Vesta, her temple and the Vestal Virgins onto the Palatine Hill, adjoined to his residence.[168] He took on a priestly relationship with Vesta that had until this point been conducted only by (female) Vestals.[169] These are the circumstances that surrounded the cult of Vesta at the time of Ovid's writing. By claiming divine ancestry to Venus through his adopted father Julius Caesar, Augustus then could also claim ancestry through Venus to Jupiter and thus to Jupiter's sister, Vesta. Augustus could then claim to be living alongside not only a Trojan divinity but his own divine ancestor.

On March 6th Ovid narrates the occasion of Augustus becoming Pontifex Maximus. It is in fact one of the great elements of the *Fasti* that can allow the author to narrate, or ignore, political events as he chooses. In this case Ovid writes in an overly flattering manner seemingly

[168] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 130.
[169] Woodard, R. D. Ovid *Fasti*, (2000), p. 216

celebrating the *princeps* and his newly attained position. However nearing the end of this narration, the poet addresses Vesta asking that she look after Augustus, asserting that her fires will live well aided by his sacred hand.

> ...cognatum, Vesta, tuere caput!
> quos sancta fovet ille manu, bene vivitis ignes. (*Fast*. 3. 426-7)
> 'Vesta guard the head of your kin, maintained by his sacred hand your fires will live well'.

Ovid tells his readers that Vesta is tended to directly and indeed literally by the *manu*, the hand, of Augustus. One can only assume that Vesta has approved of this. In Book 6 the poet instructs his readers that Vesta only permits virgin priests and those with chaste hands to attend her.

> quid mirum, virgo si virgine laeta ministra
> admittit castas ad sua sacra manus? (*Fast*. 6. 289-90)
> 'What wonder if a virgin delights in a virgin priest and only allows chaste hands at her rites?'

Augustus could perhaps have assumed that a claim to divine descent negated the negative side-effects associated with a male handling and tending to the flame of Vesta. Ovid gives his readers little doubt about his representation. The episode concerning Metellus and the 'rape' of Vesta is directly followed by another address to Vesta by the poet. Ovid tells her that her fires will shine brightly under Augustus' rule (*Fast*. 6. 455). There can be little doubt that Ovid is requesting that his readers make the connection between Augustus and Metellus. If they do so then Augustus has committed the same deed as Metellus. He has physically touched and removed the goddess from her shrine. He has snatched her away, he has raped her.

To suggest that Ovid had intended to imply that Augustus had raped Vesta is not as unlikely as it may initially appear to be. The poet is talking about symbolic rape, rape of the nature whereby the victim cannot fight back, or denounce assumptions and suggestions of her approval. Augustus

appropriated the figurehead that was Vesta and all that her cult and heritage entailed. He adopted her Trojan ancestry and exploited the links between Vesta and Aeneas. By becoming Pontifex Maximus he became the chief priest in charge of maintaining her cult. Augustus as Pontifex Maximus removed Vesta's shrine from its traditional situation in the forum and rebuilt her shrine on the Palatine Hill adjoined to his house and alongside the temple of Apollo.[170] As well as changing her physical status, Augustus also altered the rituals and behaviours that occur within her cult. He tended her flame with his hands and her shrine, the shrine of a perpetually virginal divinity was attached to the house of the emperor. Augustus raped Vesta for political purposes. Augustus had done, in fact, what Priapus had not. He touched the virgin goddess, he raped her. Ovid in his story of Metellus' removal of the goddess (*Fast*. 6. 437-460) provides the reader with the information that they need to pass judgement on Vesta's treatment by Augustus. No men are to enter the shrine, nor are they to touch the sacred possessions. Augustus, as Ovid's readers would be aware, does both of these things. If Metellus raped Vesta, then so too did Augustus. The significant difference between these two priests is that Metellus appeared to commit the deed in an act of heroism. Augustus in a calculated and carefully constructed manner had taken Vesta, his 'favourite goddess'[171] to be recognised as a part of his family, epitomised by the building of her shrine inside his house on the Palatine.[172]

Book 6 has revealed itself to contain quite subversive material relating pointedly, yet not explicitly, to the emperor and his somewhat contrived and manufactured relationship with the goddess Vesta. Readers of *Fasti* 6 are presented with the symbolic rape of Vesta by both

[170] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 130.
[171] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 136.
[172] Barchiesi, A. *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, (1997), p. 10.

Metellus and Augustus. Its position at the end of the work gives Ovid the opportunity here to use mirroring techniques between Books 1 and 6, while also allowing him to refer, in Book 6, to incidents and episodes that have occurred throughout the work. The Priapus attempted rape stories of Lotis and Vesta occurring in Books 1 and 6 represent a mirroring technique that signifies Book 6 as the intended end of the poem. Newlands has argued that the episode from Book 6 and its surrounding context serves to illustrate not that this episode is an inferior repetition in need of abandoning, rather that its purpose is to achieve a balance within the poem. She argues that the two episodes should be read as supporting each other and that the modified repetition can be seen as symbolising the closure of the text: 'neither version of the myth should be discarded…together they should be interpreted as one part of an overall poetic design in which repetition serves as a sign of closure'.[173] This would strengthen the already highly supported argument that *Fasti* was designed and written with the intention of only containing six books to correspond with the first six months of the calendar year. The episodes frame the work, with the Vesta account in Book 6 representing the political nature of the work that has been developed and strengthened throughout the poem. These parallel incidents are not pointless trivialities, rather they represent the beginning and the end of this poem. The Lotis episode sets the scene for the reader. Upon encountering the Vesta rape attempt, given the material that surrounds this episode and the situation of Vesta within Augustan Rome, this episode becomes a part of a greater whole linking Augustus with the appropriation of this deity.

The mirroring of the Priapus rape episodes is strengthened by another rape story, one with strong links between Books 1 and 6, the rape of Carna by Janus. That Janus is the god of openings and doors is highly significant given his role in Book 1, Janus is the opener of the year (*Fast*. 1. 65).

[173] Newlands, C. E. *Playing With Time*, (1995), p. 129.

The reader is introduced to Janus on the first of January (*Fast*. 1. 43). On the first of June the reader is introduced to Janus' rape victim Carna (*Fast*. 6. 101). Carna is the goddess of the hinge, she holds the power to open and the power to close. Janus, we are told in Book 1, has two heads, two different faces (*Fast*. 1. 65). He also appears, within this poem, in two vastly different contexts. As the opener of this poem much narration is concerned with his festival and celebrations. Indeed the poet enters into a literary dialogue with the god, asking him questions about his rites (*Fast*. 1. 101ff). Janus' other appearance within this work is as a rapist who gives over the power of the hinge, the power of closing and opening, as a payment for Carna's stolen virginity (*Fast*. 6. 127-8). The rape of Carna in Book 6 introduces her as one whose role it is to open and to close. Janus has opened the poem in January and Carna will close it in June. As with the Priapus episodes it is the June Janus episode that is the more controversial representation of this god. There is also the underlying link between Augustus and Janus, a link which again connects Augustus with a rape story. Carna, as the goddess of the hinge, has her role as closer and opener thanks to her rape by Janus. The gates of the temple of Janus were famously acknowledged as being closed by Augustus. The closing of these gates was intended to symbolise the shutting out of war and shutting in of peace.[174] Ovid tells his readers that during Augustan rule the door will be shut to keep peace in Rome (*Fast*. 1. 281-3). This is making explicit a connection between Augustus and Janus, one that was already widely spread throughout Augustan Rome. It is not until the rape of Carna in Book 6 that another side, as it were, of Janus is exposed. And the goddess who makes it possible for the door to be shut is revealed as his rape victim.

[174]Woodard, R. D. Ovid, *Fasti*, (2000), p. 169. Woodard also acknowledge that the shutting of these gates could be representative of locking war into Rome. This is represented by Ovid at (*Fast*. 1. 123-4) however (*Fast*. 1. 279-82) represents the peace locked inside.

As a work completed in exile *Fasti* shows clear signs of political influence and the poet manages to entwine his somewhat subversive messages subtly and creatively throughout this poem. Book 6 is undeniably a book whose main ideas and themes centred on the goddess Vesta. Any attempt to write such a book would inevitably bring up a connection with the emperor because of the position of significance that this divinity held within Augustan propaganda. The inclusion within this work of the parallel Priapus episodes is certainly a matter of contention. Whatever else may be said about these episodes, they are most certainly intended to be scrutinised. Why would Ovid wish these episodes to be scrutinised? The Vesta episode occurring in Book 6 gives a remarkably subversive, almost scandalous portrayal of an Augustan deity set amongst stories relating to her 'rape' by Metellus and with links to Augustus. Did Augustus rape Vesta? He appropriated her cult, her heritage and her temple to heighten and strengthen his concept of divine ancestry for both himself and for Rome. By drawing such attention to her story, by conceiving of an imitation Greek myth to precede it in Book 1, Ovid has used a technique that he has used before, that is the somewhat altered repetition of a myth. The repetition makes the reader pause to consider the similarities and differences. In the case of the Vesta myth it is a representation, perhaps, of a degraded and altered Vesta. This is Vesta whose identity has been changed and manipulated by the story teller, just as the Trojan Vesta and her cult have been changed and manipulated by the emperor. Regardless of which myth Ovid wrote first or what his original intentions may have been, the fact remains that the *Fasti* as it stands contains both Priapus myths. Rather than view this negatively as some kind of flaw or fault within the work, it is indeed possible to see it as another triumph of this author in his subversive, inexplicit, literary attack upon the emperor and his regime. Ovid in his unique manner has represented Augustus, metaphorically, as a rapist who

is as lust-filled as the would-be rapist Priapus or the rapist Janus in his desire for power and positive propaganda for his Rome.

Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis has been to examine a number of rape episodes from within the *Fasti* text. The object of this investigation was to read these rapes in a way that highlighted both their significance to the work as a whole and suggested purposes for their inclusion within this text. Motivation for a re-reading and re-interpretation of the rapes of *Fasti* is intended as a response to the chapter 'Reading Ovid's Rapes' by Amy Richlin,[175] a work that provided a sparse and perfunctory analysis of the rapes throughout the Ovidian corpus, including those of *Fasti*. The position of this thesis is removed from traditional disparagement of the work. So too it breaks away from what Johnson termed 'superpatriarchal'[176] readings that gloss over episodes of rape and sexual violence.

The raped women of *Fasti* included within this thesis range from Greek and Roman myth, founding or historical legend to creations by the poet himself. Their stories are varied in length, description, detail and the level of explicit or graphic violence. One thing that links these women and their stories is that they are all subjected to cruel and appalling sexual violation.

The four rape myths that span Book 2 and into Book 3 represent freedom and restriction of speech. These rape episodes provide powerful depictions of the motivation and lust for power that inevitably leads to abuse and oppression of those who are weaker and subordinate. Speech within Book 2 is the enemy of these women and is used as a weapon designed to cause fear and

[175] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992).
[176] Johnson, W. R. 'The Rapes of Callisto', (1996), p. 15.

lead to subjugation. The overall effect of this rape and silence motif is remarkable. Beginning with an allusion to the raped Ganymede, the poet creates a frenzy of fear and anticipation where the reader is witness to crime after crime of rape coinciding with metamorphosis, mutilation and murder.

Within these tales of violation, Ovid situated allusions to Augustus likening him to the rapist Jupiter. The Lares, twin guardians of the hearth whose cult was restored and appropriated by Augustus, now become the products of the vicious mutilation and rape of Lara. The great founding legends of Rome, whose roots are deeply entangled with murder and rape, proved to be too tempting for Ovid and the legends of Lucretia and Rhea Silvia are found at the pinnacle of these stories. For a poet exiled for his speech, the themes of this Book offer the reader a vast scope of material with which Ovid used to lament his situation. The rapes of Book 2 combine spectacularly to represent the suffering of the poet, who silent and powerless, was unable to stop his 'rape' by Augustus. The politics of Augustan Rome are never strongly veiled by the words of the exiled poet.

The theme of *Fasti* 4 is motherhood and the representations of the mother goddesses found in this Book echo and draw upon the images found on the *Ara Pacis Augustae*. The rape story in this book is that of Persephone and it is this rape that is of central importance in driving its themes. The search by Ceres for her raped daughter draws parallels to the lamenting Procne and presents readers with a woman stricken with grief. Comparisons between the Persephone episode in this work, and those found in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and *Metamorphoses* are key in understanding the relevance of this story to its situation in *Fasti*.

The images of mother goddesses, Ceres and Venus on the surface are represented as being the traditional Roman *genetrix*. Yet a closer reading including intertextual reading with Lucretius, paints a picture of confusion. A parallel Ceres is presented as a grief-stricken and powerless mother cow whose calf has been snatched, while Venus is linked with the rape of the child Persephone. Ovid demonstrates the ease with which myth and legend can be appropriated and manipulated to serve a function. This episode conjures images not only of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* but also of the temple of Venus *genetrix*. The mother goddesses and their representations in this book highlight the Augustan obsession with divine ancestry.

The most overtly political rape within *Fasti* is that of Vesta the virginal goddess of the flame. The rape attempts on Lotis and Vesta by the lusty Priapus have been subjects of scholarly interest for some time. Book 6, the last book of *Fasti*, presents readers with the metaphorical and symbolic rapes of Vesta by both Metellus and Augustus. In Book 2 the poet alludes to the concept of Augustus as a rapist. In Book 6 that which was alluded to becomes clear. Augustus, the reader is told, has raped this goddess. This rape is symbolic of the appropriation of her cult by the emperor whose regime involved the restoration and the recreation of mythology to fit his claim of divine ancestry. The rape or attempted rape of Vesta is as ambiguous as the goddess herself. Can a goddess without a body be raped? In Book 6 she is used as a tool by the poet to represent the process of Augustan reinvention.

To quote Amy Richlin, the rape myths of *Fasti* are indeed a 'mixed bag'.[177] The women of these rapes have their own identities within this work and the rapes themselves are very different. These differences add to the striking picture that is formed throughout *Fasti*, the theme of oppression, of strength and weakness, of power and corruption, of appropriation and manipulation. The poet's own situation and his contemporary environment are always apparent in the myths of raped women who find themselves subject to the will of a stronger, more dominant male.

The purpose of this thesis was to re-investigate and to give voice to the raped women of *Fasti* who have been overlooked and undervalued by scholars. Rape myths are interwoven throughout the entire *Fasti* text and their significance in an understanding of the themes of this poem should not be underestimated. The women in *Fasti* and their rapes are used by Ovid to present themes of the helplessness and oppression of a victim who is cruelly abused, violated and controlled by those in positions of supreme power.

[177] Richlin, A. 'Reading Ovid's Rapes', (1992), p. 169.

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